

# FORES'S SPORTING NOTES & Sketches



32 TINTED FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS,  
By FINCH MASON:  
R. M. ALEXANDER:  
& CUTHBERT BRADLEY:











FORES'S  
SPORTING NOTES  
AND  
SKETCHES.



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FORES'S

SPORTING NOTES  
&  
Sketches

A Quarterly Magazine

DESCRIPTIVE OF

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SPORT.

ILLUSTRATED BY

FINCH MASON, R. M. ALEXANDER,

AND

CUTHBERT BRADLEY.

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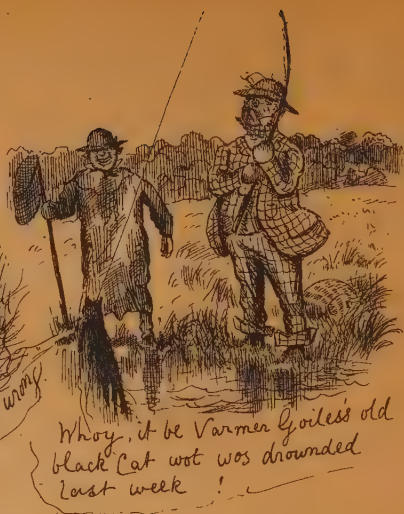
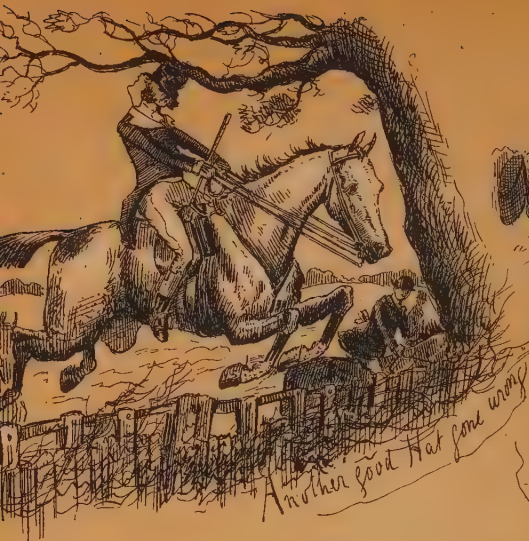
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ays at Croxden  
 up, if you've got a bite  
 Yates!

How much W. Thomas? — "Go it Breddy!"



# FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

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THE BRITISH SPORTSMAN IN 1885.

*By 'ROCKWOOD.'*



LIKE Christopher North our memories go back to the very earliest days of our youth, when the marbles were too big to hold between the thumb nail and the hollow of the fore-finger, and we envied the dexterity of the lad of more muscular hands who could plunk them from a yard off as neatly as in modern days a billiard champion could hole the red from the bottom of the table. How we envied the capitalist in marbles whose pockets were always bulging full of them! Often did we feel anxious that we could break him, anxious indeed as the gambler of Monaco to break the bank, but in vain. We had our systems and our plans, and maybe a little cheating at times, but all to no purpose. Greater skill and unlimited resources always beat us in the end. Then there was that other game which came next to marbles, viz.—‘buttons.’ A man may have trundled a hoop, spun a top, kicked a football, or carried his bat at cricket; but, if he has not played at ‘buttons’ he does not know sport. Forget shall we never, that long summer Saturday afternoon, when we met by appointment, amongst some yellow gorse-bushes in the centre of a common, close to the school. The broom was crackling under the sun’s heat; the rose linnet, his breast as red as the robin’s, was singing sweetly to his mate, which, with warm breast over its speckled eggs, sat lovingly in its hair-lined nest below; the stone-hammer was chuckling away in a most exulting manner, and the wagtail popped about from stone to stone in the stream which bubbled past.

There were five of us, all crack players, and we had good accounts to commence business with. There was a currency in

buttons then, and—do not let any one laugh—a well-regulated system of exchange. A brass policeman's polished coat-tail one was worth one four-holed bone or brass button, and the latter again was worth two of those diminutive little 'shirties' which at that time were entirely unopposed by the more gaudy studs. Others again had values fixed according to their rarity, a button cut from some honourably carried old hunting-coat, which had been laid past carefully, being worth three of the policeman's, while there were also 'gamekeepers' and 'sojers,' as well as sailors—in fact, all kinds, save those of cloth, common then on ladies' dresses, and which possibly for that very reason were disallowed.

Our penny pitchers were real good old King George's of copper, not the miserable light bronzes of the present day; and our cork, on which was piled the stakes, was a grand old 'aldermanish' looking one, which had once kept securely for years some of the best old port the old Coaching Inn near at hand could boast. Pitched we there, knocking the cork over at times, to find that it still held the stakes, being the nearest object, or rolled it away and then pitched penny against penny for the buttons till the sun was sinking in the western horizon. Then slowly and sadly we moved homeward, our clothes being pinned together with long sharp thorns from the hedge, for we were 'broke' in buttons, down to the last diminutive pearl which held our shirt together at the neck. Then family jars began to arise for the first time at home, and quarrels between husband and wife, for every shirt in the house was minus a button or two, as were also the trousers and coats in every wardrobe. Laundry-maids had just come to the conclusion that bleaching-greens were bewitched, when, fortunately, the game went out of season.

Through the more juvenile round of games, no doubt, every schoolboy goes, each simple pastime preparing him for something more manly. Comes at length the opening day of the cricket season, when the lawn is fresh and green, and he feels for the first time that electric feeling which is caused when the ball leaves the face of the well-swung bat, and flies through the field, and the cry resounds of 'Run it out!' The ominous crash of the wickets behind by the next ball, and the sad, sorrowful appearance of the shattered stumps, only make him more anxious for another innings, and in the field he is all activity, desirous that his opponents may soon all be put out, and he will have another chance. And so the healthy cricketing enthusiasm grows in



upon him till, whether he be good with bat or with ball, or smart in the field, he is in genuine love with the game. Whatever bent he may have for other sports, in future he will always be fond of cricket, and when no longer able to play with the 'first elevens' of the day will be found bat in hand, acting as umpire or watching, pipe in mouth, by the boundary ropes, every ball as it is delivered, and the style in which it is played, to the very last.

Then who does not remember the day when he first trundled the leather? When in a man's lifetime can the old fire be said to be extinct in the football player? Watch that veteran at the ropes, whose war-scars testify to many a hard-pushed maul in battle; and see how he is kicking with his old wooden stump, as in the days when he dropped a goal forty years ago, quite forgetful of the fact that he left that leg and foot in the trenches at Sebastopol. Still a boy in spirit, he would like to join in the game yet; and—yes—if you ask him he will inform you, that entering the drawing-room the other evening with an old comrade, and catching the boys just home from school in a scrimmage over a sofa pillow, he dropped it neatly with the old stump right through a mirror behind, midst the cheers of the juveniles. 'But you must not say I did it at home,' he says, 'or ha! ha! I'll be *kept in*.'

The youth, too, of St. Andrews or North Berwick never forgets his favourite pastime of golf, no matter the miles he has travelled or the years he has lived. From the first moment he has 'swiped' a ball cleverly with his 'driver' across a well-known dangerous sand bunker, or taken himself out of difficulties with a cleverly played shot with his 'cleek,' he is booked to tramp the links, it may be for many a pleasant round. Rheumatism may truss him with sharp, stiffening pains, and gout fasten like the lower tendrils of the ivy round his feet; but summer, winter, spring, or autumn, he will be found on the links. Many an old Scotch officer has prayed while serving abroad that his next home station may be in old Scotland, where there is a good golfing-green; and the wise-looking lawyers of the Court of Session have been known to hurry through cases in order to have a friendly round on the links of Musselburgh. And so they follow the ball till the turf almost rises and closes over them, the last wish of some being that their graves might be in the centres of 'putting greens,' with the round hole into which they wish to play the ball cut above their breasts.

Then, too, there is the Scotchman's great game of curling. '*The game of games*,' says every man north of the Tweed, wherein there is neither pride nor poverty, rank nor station, riches nor debt. Politicians may fight fiercely at the hustings, but around '*the channel stane*' on the icy board Whigs and Tories all agree. Religion, too, is left for a time on the bank, and freedom of opinion is as free as the freedom of expression. Thinking nothing of cold, though it is freezing hard, they fight rink against rink all day, and when darkness sets in march home singing, resolved to enjoy their favourite pastime every morning, so long as the frost lasts.

In the summer-time the curling-pond is given up in favour of the bowling-green, and game follows game till the last streaks of the sun have disappeared, and on the level greensward the bowls leave their tracks as they course with inward bias through the heavy dew which tends to clog their speed. Each game in its way helps to destroy selfishness and petty feeling,—nay, many a time quarrels of simple origin, but of long standing, have been made up on the golfing-ground, the curling-pond, or the bowling-green of Scotland, just as they have been on the cricket-fields of Old England. Alas for Old Ireland! she has no sports which may be truly classed as '*sports of the people*,' and possibly from lacking this safest of safety valves, she suffers: for if rivalry cannot be allowed to carry itself off in friendly games, it is certain to burst out in harmful brawls and riots.

Milder than all these pastimes is that which may be classed as the pastime of '*the patient, the thoughtful, and the contemplative*:' the gentle art of Izaak Walton. April showers have been falling in that soft inoffensive manner which gardeners and farmers delight in, as if afraid to break one single bud or blossom on the plants and trees which they wish to refresh and invigorate, and the steam is rising from the warm earth in white fleecy clouds. The last of the snow-wreaths has thawed down into a thin streak on the mountain side, blue bells and primroses are peeping up from amongst the woodland brackens, the hen rooks are swinging to and fro as they sit close to their eggs, and the lapwing is screaming with delight, as the angler crosses the fields to the river side. Soon he puts his rod together, and in a minute or two is wading in the stream, which is just beginning to show the first of the flood from the rain which has fallen. A passing leaf on the far side floating slowly he snatches with his '*tail*' fly, as a clever whip would remove a fly from the

leader's ear, just for to show that over the winter he has lost none of his old dexterity. One yard more slack line, and he is all in earnest. He is no mid-life angler who has made his fortune ere ever he thought of enjoying the world's true pleasures, but a herd lad who has become a village artisan, and still devotes a pleasant hour with his rod to his old love. When bare-legged on the bank, twisting wreaths of daisies and buttercups, and making prisons out of rushes for captured butterflies, he has watched the speckled trout with their heads just peeping from beneath the stones, on the keen outlook for some poor caterpillar shaken into the stream by the wind from off a shrub, or for a water-fly, which seemed to be warmed into existence by a sunbeam suddenly cast across a pool; and knows every movement of the fish. He has guddled too amongst the stones, and knows the bottoms of rivers as well as their rippling surfaces. So yonder eddy, where the water every now and then separates with a swirling water-knot which gurgles as it breaks almost complainingly, is his mark. Every inch of water he fishes between, and then comes that sweet master-cast when the line goes across fold after fold, and the flies extend like separated midges from the galled sore on a horse's back, and settle one by one right across the point where, according to the experience of his youthful days, the eyes of a trout should be bent. He has not calculated in vain: for a flash, a *splash*, and a *whirr*, proclaim that the first trout of the season has been hooked. A little easy, gentle handling, and it has been transferred to the basket, where at the close of the day will be found a stone of these beautiful plump little fish, the partridges of the streams and lakes. Then in autumn comes the casting for the lordly salmon, as he rushes homeward from the sea, jumping mill-lades and stemming artificial ladders with all the impetuosity of a Viking. The heather-bell is still in bloom on the hill side, and the yellow corn in the Highland glen has just come to the sickle, as you find your way to your favourite pool. Nought is heard but the purring sound of the river in the rapid beyond, or the occasional coo of the wood-pigeon, but of a sudden a splash makes your heart beat, for a fish has just thrown himself clear of the water. No hurry, however; he is not on the feed just yet. A small fly will suit the water best, you think, and now you are covering the pool as your setters would quarter the stubble lands or the heather. That swirl on the water was a fish,—he will come again, give him time. He comes, and in two seconds is

up stream with a run, while the reel is raising a noise like a fireman's rattle. Skill, nerve, and patience, and a quick stroke of the gaff, soon see him by your side on the bank; and though money could easily buy him in the market, no amount of British coin could have bought the delightful sensations just experienced, or tonics enough to give you the healthy appetite you have, let alone narcotics to induce the sound sleep which will follow in the evening.

Not possessing the patience of the angler, possibly, though, as a rule, the rod and gun go together, the 'knight of the trigger' claims that his sport is the best of all. Who can deny, indeed, that it has not its charms? August has come, and the young grouse coveys have been making short flights along the heathery hill side above the lodge. At last comes 'the Twelfth,' a day dear to all in the Highlands. Scarcely have the mists lifted, ere amongst the long young heather you are following with beating heart the movements of the setters, as with their feathered sterns blowing in the breeze they quarter every patch, and bend with a sweep round every little knoll. See, both are standing like statues, with eyes steady as balls of glass, and nostrils distended like those of the war-horse which snuffs the battle. So, 'Ho! steady!' is the call: when *whirr* go away the old birds with the brood. As the grey smoke clears off, your keeper testifies to your success by picking up a brace of dead which have fallen: and with the 'wee drappie' for the baptism of the season's first fire you move on o'er moss and fell, and heath-clad knoll, crossing little streamlets, the minnows in the pools of which have never seen the face of man, living as they do there in a world of their own, under sheets of ice in winter, through snow-thaw spates, and gambolling in the sunshine of summer, disturbed only when the old hen grouse brings her brood down to drink. Views of lovely lakes burst into view suddenly as you reach the top of some steep hill, and the breeze cools you as if with an icy wrap at times from the sea, where you may see the big ship, stately as the swan, sailing down the land steadily, or the white-winged yacht heeling and twisting like a sea-gull in the wake of a steamer. Let the sportsmen think of that, and of the happy hours of the first of September, when the vain partridges are sitting amongst the turnips; of October as in the days of old, when the gorgeous pheasant rose with whirring wings, and came along skimming the tops of the trees, till met by the leaden shower of death; let him think of



the days when he stalked a stag, after many days of disappointment, on the mist-clad hills of Scotland, and he can never forget the gun.

Ah! but we cannot pass so lightly away from deer-stalking as that. Here is an old picture on the wall which catches our eye as we pause, pen in hand, to look dreamily into nothing at all for the unseen friend who supplies us with ideas, and this forbids us. Yes, there they are, a happy group on the hill side; at their feet a dead stag, which Donald or Dugald, or whatever be his name, has just 'gralloched.' That veteran stalker, the old Duke of Athole, stands rifle in hand, whilst a young sportsman tries to pierce the clouds of mountain mist with his glass and descry some antlered monarch of the glen afar off. The shaggy deerhounds are there too, eager for their quarry, and looking as much like chieftains amongst dogs as their masters are amongst men. In our pause the picture brings back old sensations—long morning marches, and white mists hanging low on the mountain slopes like curtains. We feel the very caller air in our nostrils, and, not yet weakened in its flood, our heart begins to beat the old tune it did on the inside of our breast when we first crawled up to the top of the mountain ridge and felt a pulse in our forefinger as we pressed the trigger on our first stag. These seconds, which were hours when measured by the pulse of our feelings, we can never forget; nor the thud which told that our bullet had found a warmer billet than the cold brown peat moss.

'But,' says the youth who cares not for such sports, 'have you no love for racing?' 'Ay, ay lad,' is our response; 'but there is a dark side to racing which you have not seen. Nay, nay, it is not all silk jackets and champagne. That jockey there, who is but a child, will, if he is not watched, or does not watch himself, end his early career in a workhouse, and the gay young gentleman, the owner of the horse he is about to ride, his in a garret.' But, ah! we must not moralise too much. Let us take the bright and glorious side and shut our ears to the hideous voices of the men of the ring. Not that we do not like a little quiet gamble; far from it. The Iroquois Indians gamble their *all* at times in a favourite game with cherry-stones, and their medicine men encourage them, as they say it is good for them both physically and mentally. The man, as a rule, who cannot gamble 'just a wee bit,' is like the man who cannot laugh—poor company in your presence, and exceedingly dangerous when your back is turned.



But the snail which would back itself for its shell against a hare for its empty form, is not more stupid than the gentleman who puts his castle and his acres upon the back of a horse. The horse may be equal to it, but it is testing human nature too severely.

Out there in the paddock, however, the horses are waiting to be saddled. Round and round they walk, each and all of them, as much a triumph of the human brain as the locomotive of the engineer which goes at sixty miles an hour; each and all of them showing in their shining coats and swelling muscles the care that their trainer has taken to get them each and all wound up like an alarum clock, to strike at the very hour at which the race is to be run. Busily the jockeys have been getting ready in the dressing-room, and soon they are standing by the clerk of the scales ready to get weighed out. No fish-hawker who watches his scales for frugality is more careful than the gentleman who watches over the beam, and the cries go from one to another, 'Bring me a pound cloth: I want a couple of pounds of lead,' and so on, till in time every one has been turned out with his correct weight to an ounce, and the number of his horse has been hoisted on the telegraph board. Soon, above the Babel of the betting men sounds the Saddling-Bell, which is ever welcome to old race-goers. To the veteran who has seen his fifty Derbies what memories does it not recall!

'The saddling-bell! the saddling-bell!  
 Sad memories it is bringing!  
 I'll drop a tear for memories dear,  
 That's wakened by its ringing.  
 But, oh, the days are no the same—  
 What's wrong I cannot tell;  
 There seems a tone of sadness in  
 The old, old Saddling-Bell.

No horses last, or run so fast,  
 And friends have grown less cheery;  
 And faces fair are veiled with care:  
 Has a' the world grown weary?  
 Ah, no—a friend—he whispers soft!  
 'The fault is in yoursel;  
 I sadly fear you cannot hear  
 The true tones of the bell.

The horses slow? My dear friend, no  
 'Tis you that's getting older;

Your blood's too thin. Now watch "The Win."  
Come! pray, look o'er your shoulder,  
And rouse ye up. 'Tis won! "The Cup!"  
Your melancholy quell,  
Still sweet its chimes, as in old times,  
The old, old Saddling-Bell!

Soon all have cantered past, and are marshalled by the starter; the red flag is lowered, and away they stream, amidst the exciting roar of the onlookers. Like plovers skimming in full flight over the lea-land quickly do the leaders change, not by rule as with the feathered flocks, but by their riders' will, or the decree of fate. Fast as they fly—ay, far faster—works the brain of the jockey; for each stride, each gap that is opened up, requires a decision, and one which may be the decision of the race. Gallantly they all sweep round the curve, bending like a ship to the gale, and getting on even keel again as their heads are set straight for home. See, the leader rolls in trouble like a rudderless vessel, and in a moment more the wave of horses behind has washed past him. Now courses the blood in the veins of the spectators, as fast as it courses in the distended veins of the racers themselves. ONE, TWO, THREE horses single themselves out from the ruck. By Jupiter! it is going to be a race. The judge bends his head to the post, to be certain of making out the winner. They are still a few strides from home, and each jockey has measured his distance. The gallant animals respond to the final call, and lay down to it, with nostrils distended and eyes bursting from their sockets, and,—*it is over!* 'The bay has won,' say some; 'The chestnut,' says another; 'The black,' says a third; 'A dead heat,' says the fourth. The number is hoisted, and the chestnut, it is found, has won by the length of its own head. The noble animal, looking every inch a victor, is led back to the weighing-room door; the jockey takes off the saddle and is weighed. 'All right!' is called, and the race is over. Such is racing, the grandest and most exciting sport in the world; we shall not say that it is not the one most abused.

Scarcely less exciting than racing is its sister-sport, steeple-chasing. Given a bright April morning, with everything budding and blooming, the grass green and fresh, and the plough-lands looking wanton for the seed, and with the red and white flags mapping off the line, no sight in all England could be fairer than a steeplechase course. The huntsman is there, and there also are the whips, who can speak as to the merits of every

horse that is engaged in the different stakes, which are confined to members of the hunt. The hunting farmer is there, too, quite as anxious to win the Farmers' Cup as some noted cross-country rider to win the 'Grand National.' Then comes the treat of the day, when half-a-dozen or more of the finest jumpers in the world, ridden by the finest cross-country riders, come skimming up to the fences in front of the stand. How easily they skim the fences! clearing them, and no more; how warily they watch their opponents! how quickly they pull aside clear of a 'fallen friend in front!' How straightly and steadily they race at the brook, and how soon settle into their stride again! How evenly and lightly they land over the drop-fence! All these are sights which charm the eye of the onlooker. But the rider himself, what brilliant sensations does he not enjoy when riding a good one, one that 'takes every leap, and gains ground at what he takes!' How he delights in nursing him through the plough till he lands clear on to the flat at the finish, and comes sailing away, with his head over his left shoulder, looking back on his beaten competitors!

Hunting is universally recognised as the great sport of England: and no one can deny that it is one of the grandest and most health-giving. What sight can one see anywhere in this world like that on the opening morning of the Quorn at Kirby Gate? The large field, composed as it is of England's bravest sons and fairest daughters, with horses and hounds the finest the country can produce.

A meet at some old ancestral Hall, with the hounds trotting up through the woodlands from the kennels at the appointed hour, is perhaps the most truly British of British sights; one that casts, indeed, the memory back to the old days of chivalry: one that can be fitted to no stage, and furbished up in no spurious imitation. The trot to covert, the anxious moments at the covert side, listening for that key-note with which some favourite old hound opens the swelling chorus; the restive steeds, who know what is before them; and the anxious beating hearts of the young ones, who are eager to get well away, are all scenes and sensations truly and thoroughly English.

Soon the field gets reduced; the dandy who was so careful all the morning about the stainless pipe-clayed breeches and the high polish of his top-boots, has come to grief at the fence over which is the ploughed land, and stands now with shattered

eye-glass an almost shapeless mass of rich coloured loam. Sinking the valley, the hounds stream over the grass land like sea-gulls storm-driven homeward; halting sometimes for but one fitful moment, then to sweep to the left or right, and disappear behind the hedge, to rise to view again in the far distance, with the huntsmen, whips, and leading followers close behind. The screaming who-whoop in time proclaims the death, and in the evening the villagers will rush to see the tired and weary group of hounds, huntsmen, whips, horses, and followers jogging home, with that pleasant and easy swing trot which is so commonly seen at the close of a long and tiring hunting-day.

‘Ah!’ we hear the lover of the leash say, ‘it is no game to coursing.’ Every one must stand up for their favourite pastime; and have we not had many happy days at Longtown, on the hills of Lanarkshire, at Carmichael, and on the Flats of Altcar? Have we, too, not felt that pulse-creating ‘So! ho!’ when Puss dashed the water from her ‘Fud,’ and Jamie Kerse and Tom Bootiman steadied the straining dogs, and then let them leap like a flash from the empty slips? Have we, too, not seen the favourite draw clear for first turn, and wheel round till the white of its belly was seen like that of a trout in its last struggle, by the landing-net; and watched too for the hoisting of the flag which proclaimed defeat or victory?

Ah, there is no more health-giving pastime than coursing, the coursing of the old, old days. ‘Not even yacht-racing, Rockwood?’ we hear a well-known voice whisper at our side: ‘have you no pleasant memories of the old days on Clyde, or in Dublin Bay, of races round the Mouse Light, in the Thames, or the Nab, in the Solent?’ Ah, yes, we can see the skipper yet, determination in his bold bronzed face, and fire in his keen blue eyes. His crew too are *men* all, and all, like himself, eager for victory. Closely he watches the movements of the opposing vessels, till comes at last that second gun from the Commodore’s ship, which tells him that the race is started. Soon, with sails sitting like boards of card, they are racing bowsprit and bowsprit for the outward mark, while the foam rises o’er the bow and jets of spray burst at times from under the clipper’s fore-foot. Quietly the men sit under the weather-rail on deck, watching the pennant at the mast-head, or the shaking of the jib, as quietly stands the steersman nursing his boat along with the tiller, like a thing of life. The breeze softens a moment, and up goes his right



thumb. 'Give her the topsail!' is the call, and quick the men spring to execute the order. Cheerily they give their weight to the halyards. Smartly too they strain on the tack, and then haul out the sheet, while the ship bends to the extra spread of cloth and springs forward. Round the mark-boat she swings, then home to Commodore, to draw the winning gun, when all is hip-hurrahing and good cheer. Ah, yes, no man that has ever sailed much can forget his days in racing yachts.

Have we not a word for coaching? But coaching is modern as a sport, however old it may have been as a business. Possibly there are few who are really practical coachmen now; few, at least, in comparison with the numbers who are practical in many other of our sports and pastimes. One by one the old coachmen and guards are dropping out, like Waterloo veterans, and the mail-coach days only live in picture-frames and history. Like the loading of a gun with a ramrod, it is to a certain extent a lost sensation. The old days of making up time, of jolly moments at roadside houses, have gone, as have also the uncomfortable experiences with shovels on the side of a snow-wreathed hill. The unpoetical engine and railway train have displaced the poetical team and the musical horn. A few times a-year we see in Hyde Park a little to let us know of what coaching was when in its prime, when well-chosen teams and well-built drags gather with fair freights at the 'Magazine.' More real and more enjoyable, more by far like the old thing, is road-coaching. Let all who would 'a-coaching go' repair to Hatchett's White Horse Cellar, and there no doubt he will find a seat on one of the numerous coaches which start from that famous hostelry.

' In olden days, in olden ways,  
 All loving couples dâring,  
 To Hatchett's, there did first repair,  
 For Gretna Green, for pairing.  
 But with *Selby* content we'll be,  
 And no one think us silly,  
 In his "Old Times," while sweet the chimes  
 Ring out in Piccadilly.

Through shining "Sheen," where gay the bean  
 Blooms blue, and white, and saffron,  
 Through "Bushey's" vale, where by the gale  
 The chestnut spray's like chaff thrown,  
 Where blooms the rose, where sweetly blows

Virginia's water-lily—  
Oh, leave the town, come with me down,  
We'll drive from Piccadilly.


So let who may on housetops pray,  
Who are on housetops dwellers,  
If you'll forgive, we'd rather live,  
And fast not, in "The Cellars."  
The old White Horse still holds the course  
As fresh as any filly,  
So come with me, and drive full free—  
Yes, drive down Piccadilly.'

And such are the sports of the genuine Briton in 1885. Long may they be preserved in healthy condition, and enjoyed to the full by healthy-minded and healthy-bodied people! The men who tossed the caber and 'putted' the stone in the Highlands, helped to win Waterloo under the command of officers who had acquired a reputation for pluck in the hunting-field. As it was in the past so will it be in the future, and on our football and our cricket-fields, as well as on the golfing-links and curling-ponds of old Scotland, will be found men who would wield the sword or the rifle in aid of their country, in the face of an enemy, when the enemies of sport would be seeking the shelter of the caves and the woodlands. Men who have charged the bullfinches of the Shires have been found the readiest to charge bayonets. Yachtsmen have manned life-boats and done deeds of daring at sea. Who is there, then, with a heart of honour, who shall dare to attack The British Sportsman in 1885?

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## ON BOARD THE COMMODORE'S BOAT.

*By* COULSON KERNAHAN.

HEN I think of the absurdity of my sitting down to write about yachts and yachting—I, who only a few days ago, did not know the boom from the bowsprit, or the difference between a cutter and a schooner—I am doubtful whether I ought to be amused or amazed at my own impudence.

Therefore, O Reader of nautical proclivities, if you have begun this sketch with the idea of hearing one wise in things yachting discourse learnedly thereon, let me warn you thus early of your

mistake. All I propose doing is telling you, as plainly as I can, of my introduction to that most delightful of sports, and of the first impressions produced thereby on the mind of one whose only connexion with 'fleets' is confined to the street of that name; who gets 'stranded' at times, but always in the region of the late lamented Temple Bar; who, though he does not belong to a 'club,' is yet a member of a staff; whose Commodore is an Editor; and his colours black on a white ground—in brief, an occasional magazine scribbler.

My friend Cruiser is a member of two clubs, and the Commodore of a third—let us call it the 'Thanet.' Yachting is his hobby, and the genuine enthusiasm he displays therein is really most refreshing in these days of languor and laziness. It is quite true that he rides it almost to death; but on the other hand, the man who has no hobby of any sort, who leads such a corpse-like existence as to be entirely unsusceptible to enthusiasm on any topic, may be a most estimable member of society, and an excellent subject for a lengthy laudatory epitaph, but in other respects he is about as cheerful a companion as a hairdresser's block or a tailor's dummy. Having taken what Lord Randolph Churchill would call the above 'preliminary canter,' I will return to my subject once more.

It had been a week of magnificent weather. The sun, instead of hiding his head in clouds all the morning (like a lazy man who cannot summon up courage to get out of bed), as he so often does in England, shone in at your bedroom window the very first thing, with the bright splendour of midday. When Friday afternoon came round, I was just wondering what to do with myself on the Saturday and Sunday, when I walked my friend Cruiser, sunburnt and tanned as he always is, bag in hand, and dressed in the blue suit that generally denotes he is 'off to the boat.' 'Look here, old fellow,' he said; 'you have never been for a sail with me yet, although I have often asked you. Join me at Gravesend to-morrow: it will be splendid on the water, and I know you'll enjoy it. Come down by the 1.45 train if you can get away. I've got a race on in the morning, but it will be all over by one. What do you say? is it a bargain?' I agreed, of course; gladly, too, for Cruiser is a right good fellow, besides being capital company. 'It's only a little club race,' he said in reply to my inquiry. 'I think I ought to pull it off, however, for although I say it myself, the *Frolic* is one of the smartest little crafts afloat.' Judging from the opinions of the yacht-

owners I met on that trip, the class of vessels afloat on English waters must be of a very high order indeed, for among some fifteen gentlemen to whom I was introduced, more than half imparted to me in a confidential tone that they possessed 'The smartest little craft afloat, sir.' At first I was much impressed, and regarded the owners of these nautical phenomena with profound respect; but when I found there were so many boats of astounding superiority about, I became able to bear the information with comparative composure. I suppose, if we were in the habit of meeting an archangel every day, familiarity would, in time, breed a certain kind of contempt; and we should slap him on the shoulder, and dig him in the ribs—providing such ethereal creatures possess ribs and shoulders—in the same way that we should an ordinary human being. I confess I felt some slight curiosity about the race in which Cruiser was going to take part. I often see him in town, and as the conversation generally turns on yachting, I frequently hear that he has entered his boat for races, all of which he fully expects to 'pull off easily.' When, however, I inquire about the result of the afore-said races, I generally get some such reply as this: 'Awfully annoying! I was sailing splendidly, overhauling the *Egyptian Queen* at a tremendous pace, and just as it was a certain win for the *Frolic*, I had my main-halyard-block carried away by a sudden squall. I should have won easily if it hadn't been for that. Confounded nuisance, wasn't it?' Of course it isn't always the 'main-halyard-block.' (I won't answer for the correctness of the technical term.) Sometimes the 'bowsprit' goes wrong at the critical moment, and failing that, I am told it is the 'jib-boom.'

I hurried through my work on the eventful Saturday morning; stuffed my 'flannels' into a bag in the usual untidy way in which we unfortunate male creatures perform the operation dignified by the name of 'packing;,' jammed a cap and a pair of tennis-shoes on top of them; and caught the 1.45 from Cannon Street, as arranged. Arrived on board the *Frolic*, the first thing the Commodore did was to present me with a mop, with the remark, 'Here, take hold, old fellow.' I accepted the proffered article in a doubtful sort of way, not knowing what was intended of me in respect to it. Was some strange nautical rite going to be performed in which I was to play the part of victim? Visions of being tarred and feathered flashed rapidly through my mind; and I was just preparing for a practical joke when the Commodore



explained his meaning by vigorously rubbing his boots on the mop, requesting me to do the same, after which I had to finish them off on a small foot-mat. I remember as a schoolboy, that to enter a room with dirty boots was an offence of the gravest order; but I verily believe that any yacht-owner would prefer having Jonah himself on board, rather than a man who did not remove every microscopical reminiscence of *terra firma* before venturing to put foot on his decks. I was reading a book the other day, called *Popular Delusions*. If I were acquainted with the author, I should suggest to him that it is incomplete in one respect; namely, the delusion which all yachting men appear to labour under respecting the cleanliness of their boats. They all seem born—master and men alike—with the fixed idea that they are in a most deplorable condition of dirt, and will spend hours in violently scrubbing decks, on which it would be a matter of impossibility to discover a single speck. It is a subject of wonder to me that there is any deck left at all, so tremendous must be the wear and tear of this incessant scouring. I watched Cruiser's 'skipper' get so purple in the face as to suggest apoplexy, all through violently scrubbing a piece of brass which was almost red-hot with continued friction. I merely mention this fact. If there should be any member of the Anthropological Society among my readers, who devotes his lifetime to examining the peculiarities of the human race, I would suggest that there is a fine field of research here for his giant mind.

The *Frolic* seemed, I must confess, to my unskilled eyes, one of the prettiest little boats I had ever seen. Decks white as milk, every bit of metal on board polished and rubbed till it shone like a tiny planet. The cabin, too, was a perfect boudoir, and the very picture of neatness. Crimson plush padding all round the side, with cushions to match; neat little oil-paintings on the wall, all of a nautical character; cupboards innumerable, in which everything had its place; picturesque racks for pipes and other articles; with a tiny carved bookshelf, containing, besides a few favourite volumes, the lists and rules of the leading clubs; while a formidable carbine hanging on one side, with a vicious-looking little revolver on the other, gave a military touch to the whole. What surprised me most was the air of astonishing snugness, combined with almost miraculous neatness, which pervaded everything. I had imagined that life on board a yacht meant putting up with all sorts of inconveniences and hardships; and here, instead of having to 'rough it' in a very uncomfortable

manner, as I had fully expected, I found myself in the most comfortable quarters imaginable, surrounded by every refinement of luxury.

Chaffing and bantering, I noticed, seemed very prevalent among yachting men; whether the result of exhilaration of spirit produced by sea-air or not, I cannot say. When any yacht passed on which were personal friends of Cruiser's, there would be a good deal of this on both sides. One would meet us with a derisive yell of, 'Hullo, Commodore! you don't mean to say you've got that old tub out again? I thought she'd gone to the bottom long ago.' Another boat was met by Cruiser with the remark: 'What! Noah's ark! are you still afloat? Got all the menagerie on board?' This gentleman, however, was too smart for the Commodore, as he answered, that the menagerie *was* complete, with the exception of one species of quadruped, which is not generally considered the highest type of wisdom in the animal world, and hinting that he had kept the vacancy open specially for Cruiser.

We were getting ready to go on shore when a friend of the Commodore's rowed up and boarded us. 'He doesn't look much like a gentleman, does he?' said Cruiser, after he had introduced us. 'He doesn't look that when he's dressed, but I don't know what he looks like now.' His friend, who certainly was rather in dishabille, being without either collar or tie, seemed to enjoy the joke, and responded in a kindred spirit respecting the Commodore's personal appearance. He was to have made the third in our party on board the *Frolic*, but his brother having 'turned up' with the yacht of which they were joint-owners, he had come to ask Cruiser to 'excuse' him. 'Oh, I'll excuse you. Jolly glad to get rid of such a disreputable-looking character—aren't we?' said the Commodore turning to me. 'It's a strange thing,' he continued, in that complimentary tone which I have referred to, as seeming so common among yachting men, 'but every fellow prefers sailing in a boat which he can call his own, even when it's the most leaky old tub afloat—as in the present case—rather than in a smart, well-trimmed craft belonging to some one else.' His friend retorted in a similar strain, to the effect that, not having insured his life, and having a large circle of admiring friends, to whom his loss would be a sad blow, he thought it safer to trust his valuable person where they knew how to handle a boat properly, rather than confide himself to the care of one who, although he called himself

'Commodore,' knew rather less about sailing than a First Lord of the Admiralty. Having anxiously inquired if I had any one dependent on me, and if so, had I insured my life, he took a tragic farewell, remarking sadly that we should 'meet in heaven,' which place he evidently considered my immediate destination.

In the evening we went ashore to spend an hour at the hotel where the 'Thanet' had its club-room. Here we had a jolly evening, which I must not now venture to describe. I could cover half-a-dozen pages, telling of the yachting men I met, the stories they told, the songs they sang—'A life on the ocean wave,' being a marked favourite—and the kindly banter and chaffing they interchanged. Of course, as regards much of the talk, I was 'at sea,' metaphorically and literally; but I must say, that a more genial, hospitable set of English gentlemen, I could not wish to meet. Cruiser and I were the first to return to the yacht, and I can hardly describe how inviting the cosy little cabin looked as we stepped on board, the steady light of the brightly burnished lamp shedding a warm, cheerful glow over all. As we sat smoking a last cigar, and sipping our grog, we could hear the splash of oars as various dingies went by, conveying their owners to their boats. Every now and then we would be hailed with a '*Frolic ahoy!*' as some personal friend went by, to which we would respond with a friendly 'Good-night.' About twelve we made preparations for bed. I slept splendidly, with but one interruption. Near two o'clock, or thereabouts, some drunken fool rowed out to where the yachts were lying, and favoured each boat with an impromptu serenade on the fog-horn. A more diabolical noise I never heard. Cruiser woke up under the impression that some large steamer had broken adrift, and was bearing rapidly down on us. He sprang out of his berth in a great state of excitement, violently bumping his head against the cabin-roof, and, after shoving back the sliding top of the cockpit, looked out, inquiring angrily, 'What the — ahem! prince of darkness—is all that row about?' As a derisive yell was his only answer, I don't wonder that he consigned the departing musician to eternal perdition, using, however, more emphatic phraseology than I have mentioned. As the individual with the fog-horn visited each boat to repeat his solo, there was a general awakening all round, and the sounds that broke the silence of midnight were not exactly the fervent utterances of religious devotees engaged in prayer. However,





— ah! pence of darkness, in all that row about? —

What the





we soon dropped off to sleep again, and I awoke blithe as a lark. It was grand, getting up on deck early that bright, clear, autumn morning. There was just enough freshness in the air to exhilarate and brace the system, without any suspicion of chilliness. Dotted around were the shapely outlines of other yachts, lying peacefully at anchor, only just heaving now and then in the swell of a passing vessel, as some sleeping child stirs gently in its slumbers. Then there was the refreshing plunge over the side, making the blood dance through the veins like liquid fire, and giving an appetite for breakfast that would bring visions of the workhouse before the eyes of a boarding-house mistress.

Breakfast being over, we got the sails set (I say we, though I was only a spectator), and, there being a brisk wind blowing, were soon scudding seawards grandly, accompanied by the other yachts of the 'Thanet,' for whose benefit the Commodore discharged the carbine as a signal to start. It was really a beautiful sight, the boats bounding along like living things, as though they, too, entered into and enjoyed the run; the white sails flashing and gleaming in the sun; the water rippling from the glittering keel, and every now and then dashing over the decks in a snowy cascade of spray. The control Cruiser had over the boat was simply wonderful. She seemed to obey every wish and answer to his call as though they had but one will in common. In fact, he could make her 'do everything but speak,' as some one has before observed about a yacht. It is impossible to describe the light-hearted exhilaration of spirits you experience as you scud along, the salt spray dashing in your face, the fresh breeze tingling your cheek, the boat leaning over on her side, as though she were coyly withdrawing from the caresses of the frolicsome wind, and the sails flapping above, just as if they, too, were trying to express their gladness. A restless sort of pastime, however, is yachting. There is no sitting still long with your hands in your pockets, for the boat wants constant attention and looking after. At one time, Cruiser would sit cross-legged with his hand on the tiller, calmly watching some huge lugger or steamer that, to my uneducated eye, seemed as if it must inevitably run into, and sink us. But I soon found that I could place implicit confidence in the Commodore's judgment. We would skim coquettishly in front, or else pass her to leeward, and I would once more breathe again. I must confess, however, that after careful consideration the chief point in yachting seems, to my uninformed mind, to consist in rushing frantically forward,

and pulling violently at some rope or rigging, without, as far as I could see, producing the slightest effect whatever. (Please don't curl your finely-chiselled Roman or Grecian upward in that contemptuous way, Mr. Reader of nautical knowledge; and don't use bad language, even though I *am* 'a fool.' I only said 'seems,' and am willing to bow to your superior judgment in every respect.)

Past Southend, away out to the Nore, the breeze freshened up, and as wind and tide were both against us we had rather a rough time of it, the boat lurching and tossing like a cork on the heavy water, but she cut her way through splendidly; and as it was now getting on for two the Commodore decided to turn. I knew, of course, having wind and tide in our favour would make a difference, but I was not prepared for such a marked change. The *Frolic* slid along as smoothly as though she were on wheels, skimming over the water like a swan. And now, being voraciously hungry, we went below for dinner. I had expected that we should be regaled on tin-beef and biscuits, and here was a delicious roast fowl, done to a turn, bacon, potatoes, marrow, tomatoes, fruit, and as good a bottle of hock as one could wish for. I don't think I ever enjoyed a dinner more, which, for a young man of sound constitution and good conscience, is saying a great deal. Then we came on deck again, and puffed luxuriously at the most fragrant of cigars, which, I am inclined to fancy, had not played a conspicuous part in augmenting the national revenue.

The sail back seemed to pass with lightning-like rapidity. Before I knew where we were we had passed Gravesend and dropped anchor at Greenhithe, and our yachting trip, as far as sailing went, was at an end. The rest of the evening was spent in inspecting a tremendous Brazilian turret-ship which was lying close by, and in paying visits, and receiving calls on board the *Frolic*. It was quite dusk when Cruiser called the 'skipper' to get the dingy ready to row us ashore, to catch the train back to town; and, as I stepped on to the dark landing-place at Greenhithe, the bright, steady light on board the *Frolic* shone across the dark cold water with a cheerful, homelike look, that made me wish old Time would put his clock back twenty-four hours, so that, instead of having to return to smoky old London, I might just be going on board again to commence my Yachting Trip.

## A DAY AT THE ROUGH GROUND.

By 'AVON,'

*Author of 'How I became a Sportsman,' &c.*

**I**T is a moot question whether, for shooting purposes, it is pleasanter to visit old and well-known quarters or go to entirely new ones. In the first you have the decided, though perhaps not unmixed pleasure, of meeting old and tried friends ; and here, perhaps, the older the friend the more jealousy, which is what I allude to when I suggest that the pleasure may be not altogether unmixed. You know every inch of the ground, know the run of hares and the flight of birds, and you can often tell to a certainty where they will be found again when lost to sight ; you know the haunts of the woodcock, and exactly where to place yourself when a covert or dingle is being beaten ; when to get forward and when to lay conveniently a little behind. Here let me say that I am not writing of battues or any swell kind of shooting, but good, honest, fair sport, when game is tolerably plentiful, and where men are content with something less than fifty shots an hour. I mean the kind of shooting such as our fathers delighted in, and which it has been my happy lot to have participated in freely.

In the other case, that is, going to entirely new ground, you have the pleasure of speculation and anticipation, and every one must admit that they constitute, not unfrequently, a very large element of all our pleasures and enjoyments ; the ground is new, and the people strange, and if everything corresponds with your own particular views and fancies, all may be *couleur de rose* ; but as likely as not you find a jealous, disagreeable customer, who is continually getting in your way, shooting at your birds—which practice, I regret to say, since the introduction of breechloaders, is become much more common than it used to be. A well-known nobleman, before going out shooting, used to say to his guests, 'I am not a jealous shot, but I am a confoundedly rapacious one.' Well, where is the difference ? A man who admitted that he wanted all the shooting, must have been a rather unpleasant customer at times.



I had the pleasure of shooting for seventeen seasons consecutively with an old and valued friend—now, alas! amongst the dead—who had a charming estate for shooting purposes in that sporting county, Shropshire, where a great variety of game could at times be killed, from grouse down to jack-snipe; hares, partridges, and pheasants abounded; wild ducks were not uncommon; grouse were met with occasionally; and that gamest of all birds, the woodcock, was to be found in every covert and dingle on the estate, and I have frequently killed five or six to my own gun in a day. The property was situated at the head of a valley between the Titterstone and Brown Clee hills, which accounts for our finding grouse occasionally, there being a fair sprinkling on both those grand old hills—mountains they may fairly be called. The estate, of about 3000 acres, was in a ring fence, and not even a footpath through it; but, unfortunately, all the coverts, bar one, were on the extreme outside, and therefore as ‘Old John,’ the cunning old keeper, used to say,—

‘If they be na killed, sir, we ha’ done wi’ um.’

The old fellow used to what he called ‘peaper’ the outside coverts before we shot them; viz., he put a piece of newspaper into every meuse on the outside fence, which effectually turned the hares back to the guns; not so, however, with the pheasants, for once on the wing, and the gun failed to do its duty, good-bye to the longtails, which inevitably went into the neighbour’s pot. The ‘bar one,’ the covert which I have alluded to as not being on the outside, was the ‘rough ground,’ the especial pet of my friend, ‘th’ Old Squire,’ as he was invariably called, and of his chief tenant, a thorough sportsman, upon whose farm it was situated; and justly, too, it was an especial pet covert, for it was invariably full of game. Whenever the farmer heard the chiming of Mr. Wickstead’s harriers in the neighbourhood he used to say,—

‘There’s one of my hares coming home.’

And come home they did, and straight into the ‘Rough Ground,’ where they were perfectly safe; and they knew it; as, apart from a generous and sportsmanlike feeling on the part of the master not to allow his hounds to disturb such a preserve, for he invariably whipped off as soon as he ascertained the hunted hare was making for this particular covert, it would have been impossible to do anything with hounds in it, as it was always chokefull of hares.

The ‘Rough Ground’ consisted of about six acres of covert,

proper, lying on the side of a hill with a stream of water running through the bottom of it. The top part of the covert was composed principally of oak, with a beautiful undergrowth, just sufficient for game to hide under, but not so thick as to prevent their having plenty of room to move about. The bottom part of the covert had as well, near the stream and right up to the outside, a great many alder bushes, and this was a very favourite resort of the pheasants, and was also a sure find for a couple or so of cocks. There was a narrow grass ride straight up the centre of the covert, and a wider one right across the middle. But the beauty of the place as a preserve for game was not actually the covert itself, but its surroundings. I have seen a great many places, but none to my fancy so perfect as this, for on three sides there were large grass-fields with lots of fern and what is called in the country 'feg,' viz., a kind of blue-flowering grass, which was always up as high as your knees; into these three fields no cattle of any kind were allowed to enter during the shooting season, consequently the game was perfectly quiet and undisturbed. No dog was ever known to be allowed to go there *except my retriever*, and this I took to be a great compliment—to the dog at all events. The 'Rough Ground' was only shot over once in the season, and then, as may be imagined, it afforded a good day, with the exception that during the partridge shooting, when all the surrounding country had been well shot, we had one day in the rough fields surrounding the covert, and then we went backwards and forwards from the rough grass to the surrounding stubbles and turnips. Need I say that we were always sure of a day, and the best during the whole season? for the partridges felt that it was a place in which they were generally secure and undisturbed. They laid like stones, and no matter how often we returned to it on that one day we were sure to get plenty of shooting. Every sportsman knows how soon partridges find out where they are safe, and this may be exemplified by the well-known and often-abused fact that they so frequently pop over the fence, and settle again just out of your shooting.

But return we to our covert shooting. The party which used to assemble twice a-year at the hospitable shooting-box of the old Squire—first for the partridge, and secondly for the covert-shooting—always consisted of four; the old Hall, then occupied as a farmhouse, not providing accommodation for more than that number.

First, there was the old Squire himself, a capital shot and a most particular sportsman in all that related to the old-fashioned etiquette of shooting ; but there was always an occasion when he forgot himself and became as wild as any boy, and that was when the cry of 'Woodcock!' was heard. I have known him tear all the way down a narrow strip of covert on the outside bounds of the estate, driving every pheasant out, never to be seen by us again, before the guns could be placed, and this to get the first shot at a cock, which more than likely, after all, fell to the lot of some quiet shot.

Then there was Colonel C——, a stout, heavy man, who had served over a quarter of a century in India, but being a temperate liver, still had his liver sound ; he was a very slow, poking shot, but pretty sure when he did fire ; he stuck to his old Westley-Richards muzzle-loaders to the last, and could not be persuaded even to look at a breech-loader.

Col. P——k, a hard, wiry man, a brilliant shot, and a first-class performer across country ; he was always called the 'Corporal' from his habit of wearing his whiskers cut in the old-fashioned mutton-chop fashion once prevalent in the Line.

Then there was Major R——, a militiaman, tall, thin, active, and a good shot ; he, poor fellow ! died young from an injury to his spine in jumping a fence whilst out shooting with me : he fell into my arms and fainted, was carried home, and although he lived for a year or so never recovered.

Major C——, another Indian officer, short and thick, a rare walker and a capital shot ; he had a habit of always carrying his gun behind him, but he could bring it to the front quick enough, and most effectively too. His brother, a clergyman, a thin, wiry fellow, and the best shot of the whole lot, made up, with the present writer, the party from which the four were selected : but your humble servant always had the pleasure of making one.

Before the railway was made to Bridgnorth we used to assemble at the Wheatsheaf at Kidderminster, or that quaint old town, Bewdley, where more inns and public-houses can be seen from one spot than from any other town I know of its size. We always used to meet at luncheon, after which we had a fifteen-mile drive to reach our quarters ; and we formed a regular procession, consisting of two or three dog-carts, or gigs, and a van for the luggage and another for the dogs. The last mile of the road was through some fields, a short cut in which there

was no regular road, and the bumping we got was something to be remembered, but we enjoyed it notwithstanding. A well-cooked haunch or saddle of four-year old Clun-forest mutton, and some excellent claret, with a rubber of whist and no end of cigars, pipes, and hot with, or cold without, sent us off at a reasonable hour to prepare and make ready for the morrow.

Well, here we are, ready for the 'Rough Ground.' But not quite yet, for we have to shoot all the other coverts first; for many of our birds will, of course, go there; and the hares which are not killed, and which go the right way—inland, will be sure to do; and although these other coverts, which are really good and afford very pretty shooting, when well managed, and no unfortunate cock interferes with the even tenor of the old Squire's equanimity, we reserve the pet piece of covert for a *bonne bouche*, and for the last day but one: the last day we devote to running through all the outsides again, to pick up what may be left, or what has perchance returned. The dingles, too, which are many and large, afford very good sport, and here we invariably shot to spaniels, old Dash and his descendants, as good a breed of cockers as ever were shot to; which breed, I fear, has all but disappeared, and been supplanted in most places by the sleek-coated dog-show abominations, fit only to be put in glass cases, or to lie on the hearth-rug with blue ribbons round their necks.

Now we come to the day for the 'Rough Ground' at last, and every one is eager to be at what always is the best day of the season; a good old-fashioned day, with just enough shooting to make it lively, but without slaughter. The bag generally consists of about 150 head, more or less, as the auction bills say, chiefly hares and pheasants (cocks only are killed), made up with rabbits, and a couple or two of woodcocks: of the latter, the bottom part of the covert is sure to hold at least a couple, and a dingle which runs down from one part of it for at least half a mile to that capital trout-stream, the Rea, holds generally another couple or two. Outside the hall-door stands old John and his lieutenant, a queer but lithe and active customer, rejoicing in the name of Badger, with a cap on his head made of a hedgehog's skin, and whom, for more reasons than the apparent one, would not be a very safe man to attempt to bonnet. Then there is the little army of—martyrs I was going to say—beaters I mean; but martyrs they are, to a great extent, for they have all the hard work to do, and little of what appears to shooters



the pleasure of the thing, and they will be pretty sure to have half the clothes torn off their back; but, judging from their smiling, healthy-looking faces, they anticipate as much pleasure out of it as the gunners themselves, and perhaps in reality they obtain as much or more. Every man is armed with a stout hazel cudgel (which he is instructed not only to well beat the bushes with, but to poke it into them well, as game will frequently lie till absolutely poked out), and has been thoroughly well drilled, when once inside the covert, never to open his mouth to utter a word, and not even to whistle. I believe firmly, if there is any one thing which detracts from their enjoyment it is this observance of silence, and even with the greatest sternness and strictness of discipline on the part of our general, involuntary ejaculations will now and again slip out when a hare or rabbit tries to break back. I used to shoot in one very large wood of nearly two hundred acres, where the beaters certainly did not shout or halloo, but nothing could stop them from whistling. gently at first, and gradually creeping on to a regular charm. The consequence was, the pheasants ran from one end of the wood to the other, and often out of it down the hedgerows, and it was impossible for the keeper who knew his business, but had an ill-regulated and uncontrollable lot of beaters to deal with, to show his birds. Old John was quite a character, but he did not look that of a keeper in the least; sixty years of age, with long scrawly hair, bare of flesh and gnarly as an old pollard oak, active sinewy, and strong, of the middle height, long in the back, short in the legs, and as long in the arms as a gorilla. He was a most powerful-looking fellow; with a broad slouched hat, and clothed in an old grey suit of his master's, the upper garment being generally a great-coat, no one would have taken him for the clever keeper he was, or indeed for a gamekeeper at all; but he was, and one of the best trappers of ground vermin I ever saw, and he had a rare knowledge of the habits of game. He had forgotten more than a great many of the keeper-*looking* fellows dressed in velveteen, with knowing-looking breeches and gaiters, or as is now commonly the case with swell keepers, of suits of tweed, ever knew. He was particularly silent, and scarcely ever raised his voice beyond a hoarse whisper.

Such was Old John, but he had his faults like most people: his one great failing was drink, but it was only once a-year that he indulged in it, and his way of doing so was peculiar. After the covert-shooting was ended he, of course, had some substantial tips,

including always a handsome one from his master if the show of game was good, and he was in the habit of going off to a certain pub., and having a week's solid drinking, all by himself: he would not join any company or enter into any conversation with any one, but sat all day in one place with his pot of beer beside him and his pipe in his mouth; his general attitude being, leaning on the table with his head on his hands. Peculiar, certainly, and unsociable; but whether he was hatching some plan for next year's campaign, or gloating over his success in the one just ended, was not known. When the week was ended John walked off and went about his work as usual, and indulged no more in this way until the next season came round. While in this state he was dangerous and would not be interfered with, for I know one of the farmers, who had a liking for the old fellow, tried once to get him away, when he showed fight at once, and said, in a way that there was no mistaking, 'If you want to keep your skin whole you'd best leave me alone.' The farmer took the hint and did so.

We at length come to our day at the 'Rough Ground,' and breakfast over and pipes on full blast, every man takes up his gun from his own particular corner. The farmer, upon whose land our covert is situated, a regular fire-eating old Welshman, as peppery as his red hair and whiskers denote, but an enthusiastic and genuine sportsman and game-preserver, comes in to say all is ready.

'Have you sent on your stops?' asked the Squire.

'They have been gone on this half hour, sir, under old Tommy Parton, and if any one stops tapping, I wager the old man will threaten to skin him alive; or if he should venture to open his mouth, to sew it up like they used to do ferrets.'

I have, years ago, actually seen this cruel operation performed, but I trust in this enlightened age such barbarity is not now practised.

Old Tom deserves a word, for he was seventy-five years of age and as active as a boy, and far more enthusiastic about the sport than most of them. He used to boast that he had never missed a day's shooting at the 'Rough Ground' for sixty years. He was a plasterer by trade, and always came out in his apron, which, as he said, protected his legs from the thorns; but it was in tatters long before the day was over, for Tommy did not spare himself, and went well into the thick. Having taken our posts silently, the top part of the covert being beaten downwards, the

guns soon begin ; a pop every now and then at first, and tolerably brisk by the time the beaters have got down to our side. Then the other top quarter is beaten, which yields a very fair show. After this we line the middle ride, and the covert is beaten up to the guns ; and here we have some excellent shooting, pheasants, hares and rabbits, coming out in quick succession, until we come to a lovely little corner bordering and just running into the outside grass-fields, and the beaters are stopped until the guns are placed, when we get some rare popping and as pretty a bouquet of long tails as any man need desire. This finishes the covert itself, and we adjourn to the old barn to luncheon : the barn is filled with clean and sweet wheat straw, which makes a most luxurious couch. We do not go in for Norwegian kitcheners and hot luncheon, but cold fowl and ham, and the hung beef, for which the county is famous, go down with a relish which the fine air from the Clee Hills and a good morning's sport have lent to healthy appetites. Of course a pipe, which we have to adjourn to the ante-room, viz., the open air, to indulge in. We then beat the rough grass-fields, which, to my fancy, is the best of the sport, as, besides other game, we get a good many shots at partridges, who have been long used to look upon this place as perfectly safe from all intrusion and lie well. After this we have a long and wide dingle, which runs down to the Rea, to bring back from the further end, and here we bag many a hare and cock pheasant that has stolen away early in the day, only to prolong its existence for a few hours, as we make sure work of them before they can return to the home for which they make.

Four o'clock, and it begins to show signs of coming night, so we adjourn again to the barn, outside which the game has been hung to cool on two long poles. Sixty-one hares, seventy-five pheasants, six brace of partridges, five cocks, and about forty couple of rabbits, make up a bag sufficient to gratify a sportsman. And may the 'Rough Ground' yield as pretty shooting to the present possessor as it did in the time I write of, is the hope of the writer ; and when brought to bag, that it is disposed of as it used to be, viz., distributed amongst those who shot and those upon whose land it was reared. If this were the case oftener than it is, there would not be so much grumbling about game, which, after all, the present battue system has in a great measure caused.

I will conclude with an anecdote of the old farmer. He





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had a breed of rare cocker spaniels, black, white, and tan, with anything but long ears or smooth coats; but they could and would face the thickets and blackthorns in the roughest weather, and never tired. They came originally from Lord Forester, of Willey Hall, and no more resembled the flat-coated dog-show abominations called cocker spaniels of the present day than chalk resembles cheese. Old F—— could break them too as well as any man I ever saw, and one young dog that he was particularly proud of, one day would not drop to shot, chased hare, and otherwise misbehaved himself. The old fellow got tremendously chaffed about his spaniel breaking, when he got into a towering passion—which it did not take much to bring on, by the way—and after a deal of strong language at length got hold of young Dash, and administered not a small dose of sound correction; then standing up, looking proudly about, and with his foot on the dog, who was lying feet uppermost, ‘Now, sir! won’t he down to charge?’

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## WITH THE SALMON BY THE RIVER.

*By* CAPTAIN CLARK KENNEDY, F.R.G.S., F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c.

‘Now sing we the glories of torrent and stream,  
On our way to the North of the salmon I dream :  
For the “King of the river” is waiting for me  
In the pools of the Tweed, of the Tay, and the Dee.  
So bring the best liquor I have in the house,  
And drink to the land of the salmon and grouse!’



SINCE the long-gone-by days of honest old Izaak Walton it has been the fashion to put down the simple angler as a contemplative individual; and, whether it be the case or not, that every disciple of the rod and line is a bit of a philosopher. We hold the opinion that an angler, as a rule, is a real and hearty lover of the glories of nature, and, generally, is a right pleasant sort of fellow, well met with all the world around him, ready to see things in a pleasant light, and to make the best of what pleasures fall to his share, and to make up his mind to enjoy himself to the utmost.

It has been stated, and, we quite believe, with great truth, that a fisherman is never, or, at any rate, very seldom, a really *bad*

man ; and when one comes to sit down for a quiet moment or two, and think the simple problem out, surely it should be thus ! For what, in this poor work-a-day world of ours, is better calculated to elevate the sordid and money-loving mind of man, and to cause his thoughts to stray from selfishness pure and simple, and to make him a happier—because, for the time being, a more natural, simple person—than by straying, rod in hand (for none of us, even in the relaxation of pleasure, should be idle), amongst the glorious and never-palling beauties of old Nature ? There can, we suppose, be no doubt whatever, to any thinking mind, that one's whole being is improved by a complete change of scene, or that one's spirits are brightened by wandering in distant fields and pastures new ; just as the eyes delight to rest upon some grand, far-stretching panorama of sea or land, of placid lake, of foaming torrent, of purple moorland, or grey-capped towering mountain peak, or of even familiar green meadows where cattle lie under the shady pollards by the brook, and where the swallows skim happily over the purling streamlet.

Few will, we think, deny that the angler is generally a very happy man, and generally speaking, as before stated, a good man into the bargain. He has, of course, as we all must have, his disappointments ; and though the reader who is not a brother-lover of the gentle craft may smile, it is as serious a loss to the patient angler to lose the big trout that he has perhaps had, as he fondly hoped, 'well hooked,' upon his frail line, or to see the silkworm-gut that had held under control the lordly fifteen-pound salmon suddenly break as a thread—it is, we maintain, often fully as great a disappointment to him when such calamities happen, as it is to the man of business who makes a bad bargain, to the investor who loses a large sum of money, to the minister out of office, to the gardener whose early potatoes are nipped by the cruel, late frosts, or to the lovely 'old-young' lady who waits on, ever hopeful of better things, from twenty-eight to thirty, from thirty to—well, any age !

Still, in the charming pastime of angling, whether it be for that king of the river, the silvery salmon, or for the bonnie fat trout, so bright and so gay, in his garment of spotted beauty ; whether your would-be prey be the cunning grayling or even the spine-backed perch, or the savage green pike of old Father Thames, or else the mud-loving tench, or the fat carp of the Midland meres,—whatever may be your aim, we can assure you

pleasure in your simple, though often very exciting pursuit; and now that the bitter easterly winds have at length taken their leave of us, and the spring has, late though it be, decked the woodlands with beauty, and painted the green meads with golden cowslip and buttercup, and white cuckoo flowers, and blue germander speedwells, and when the sun is brightly shining overhead, when skies are azure, and when

‘The blue bells are nodding their heads in the glade  
And we fancy all nature too lovely to fade,’

then it is the angler’s time to pack up his bag, to look out his best rod, that has lain idly in its long box since the close of last autumn, to search for his finest tackle and his most killing flies, and then away, away! Away full speed by the Scotch ‘limited,’ if he is fortunate enough to be going to the land of the heather and flood on the north side of the Tweed, or off by the Irish mail if *en route* for the dear old Green Isle, where in former years his good rod and his steady hand have done such gallant work. How glorious, is it not? ye dwellers in towns for the major portion of each succeeding year, to feel oneself free at last, as one starts on one’s annual and often hardly-earned holiday; and to find oneself some grand spring morning being borne at forty miles an hour through some of the most picturesque and pleasant scenery of happy England, with the world and its cankering cares thrown far behind us; for we are bent only on pleasure when ‘going a-fishing,’ and no thought of bills, dinners, or disagreeable friends, shall trouble our mind then!

Now, just accompany us ‘on a few days’ visit to one of the finest of rivers, far-famed for the number and excellence of its salmon, and for the size of its trout, in the sister isle! Last night, at the Club, we met our old friend the General, an enthusiastic sportsman, a splendid shot at both British small game and Indian big game, a fair rider to hounds, and a charming companion in every way; as who would not be who had fought with Clyde in the Mutiny as a raw lad, and who had been one of the first into the deadly Redan, that disastrous but glorious 18th of June, and who, moreover, was a grand hand at story-telling? and, what more especially cemented our affection for him, he was one of the best salmon-fishers we ever met with. Well, over a good bottle of the Club claret, such a brand as the old warrior loves, the General spoke his mind: the burden of his discourse may be summed up in the short sentence, ‘I go a-



fishing.' Like Peter of old, it was not hard to elicit the answer, 'I go with thee,' and in a short half-hour plans were discussed, the campaign decided on, and the following week (it was then the 10th of March) appointed for our start. The General had already in his mind's eye a very good and famous stretch of the river Blackwater, down in the South of Ireland; and, as his cunning hand had fished every inch thereof in former years, we could wish for no better cicerone or cheerier companion.

On the 17th day of March, then, we joined forces on the platform at Euston; a glorious spring sun was shining from out an unclouded sky, and as the express passed through pleasant Hertfordshire, and on into Warwick and Stafford, many a peep of happy country-homes did we look upon, and often and often Mrs. Heman's beautiful lines sprung to our lips, as pleasant park, smiling homestead, red-bricked Elizabethan mansion, or tiny cottage with its neat garden, were in turn passed by. There they are, those

'Stately homes of England!  
 How beautiful they stand,  
 Amidst their tall ancestral trees  
 O'er all the pleasant land!  
 The cottage homes of England!  
 By thousands on her plains,  
 They are smiling o'er the silvery brooks,  
 And by the hamlet fanes.'

On, on, we speed our rapid way, for the iron horse waits for none, and soon we are at familiar Holyhead, in the ancient 'kingdom' of Anglesea, and the 'Ulster' steamer quickly receives us and our *penates*—such as we have with us—on board, and we are on the calm broad bosom of St. George's Channel. Then, after the usual noise and bustle of Kingstown, and the short railway run to the capital, comes 'dear, dirty Dublin.' *How* Irishmen do love and adore that very odoriferous old city! But, after all, they are quite right; and why should they like any other place better? Home, sweet home, for each of us! However, 'tastes fortunately differ,' as the General observed on our taking our seats for the south; and some are lovers of the charms of the city, others pin their faith on the pleasures of the country.

A few short hours over one of the best of railways in the kingdom, and the anglers are deposited by 'Mickey' from his jaunting-car at the front door of 'the' cottage that is to be their temporary home. And what a sweet little spot is that same

tiny residence! It is yet too early in the year for the purple lilacs and yellow laburnums which surround the house to be gay in their fresh beauty, but what freshness in yonder grass! And where in the world can pastures be so green as in Erin? And just look at those fat buds of the great horse-chestnuts, literally bursting from their jackets, and contrasting with their lovely green hue against the whitening foliage of the stunted alders, by the streamlet which runs with pleasant rippling sound past the house, wending its rapid way towards the Blackwater! And, shade of immortal Walton! what a river is that glorious stream! Literally full of salmon! You must see it in order to admire it in proper manner and once taste its joys; if you are an angler, we will wager you will never jilt her to the end of your life. The evenings, early spring as it is, are rather chilly; and there will, to judge by the moon up yonder, and the stillness of the quiet air, be a frost to-night; and as we have all our baggage to unpack, our rods and tackle to put into due order for active operations to-morrow; and, most important of all, our dinner (for which we are both—our consciences being good and our appetites healthy—as ravenous as Highland falcons) being announced as ready by blushing Biddy—let us delay our inspection of the river until after our well-earned night's rest.

It is barely seven 'of the clock,' and we are still dreaming quietly and peacefully of the monster salmon we are going, we hope, to catch, when a sudden and withal a startling rattle, like distant musketry, banishes the dull god at once from our eyes, and we are up in an instant. That cannot be musketry, surely! for were we not told how peaceful was the county of Cork this year, and how free from outrage? By Jove, though, there it is again! and we tear, in our night-shirt, still scarcely quite awake, across the little passage into the General's apartment, where we see that individual already at the window, against which a grand volley of small shot in the shape of pebbles rattles for the third time, just as we enter the room. We had told Paddy Gallagher, our fisherman, henchman, and fly-tier, and general factotum as regards matters piscatorial, to call us at seven a.m. This, then, is the way he does it, evidently! and, by the powers! it is *one* way of calling a gentleman: but never mind, honest Paddy, it is an effectual one, nevertheless! The General's head and cheery face at the now open window is just in time to prevent yet another 'gravelling' of the pane by

Paddy, who stands below upon the path, with a gaff in one hand, and his other brawny fist full of small stones.

‘Well, Paddy, what of the day?’ says the Commander.  
‘Shall we get a fish?’

‘Yer honour, plase the pigs, we will; and that not one, but, begorra! maybe three or four-r of them same!’

‘Many fish up, Paddy?’ is the next query.

‘I’ve just this blessed minit cum up from the big sthream, yer honours, and what wid the salmon all tumblin’ about in the wather like grate pigs, and jumpin’ like porpoishes in an’ out betimes, I niver seen the same number of thim in Mac-loughlins.’

‘Paddy, put up the rods, we’ll begin at eight. Stay, what’s the wind? Not east, I hope?’

‘The beautifullest light breezes from the west, the saints be praised! that ever yer seen; an’ the wather just the right height this minit for the sthream. I niver seen it better.’

Breakfast that morning was not a lengthy ceremony you may be sure; and shortly after the appointed hour of eight the two anglers, keen as children and happy as schoolboys out for a half-holiday, have wended their way from the cottage, through the dew-bespangled meadow, to the banks of the river, where their excited and ready henchman is already awaiting them.

What feeling of real pleasure thrills through the veins of the born-angler, when for the first time each successive season he stands upon the bank of some favourite stream! Perhaps the reader of this essay is a keen sportsman; possibly not a lover of the angle, but, maybe, a follower of the chase. Well do *we* know, also, that wild beating of the heart as the first burst of that glorious ‘music’ of the spotted pack echoes through the woodlands when the hounds touch the scent of their fox. Well do we remember how, when a schoolboy mounted on the rough little Shetland our dear old father gave us—ah me! many years ago—we patiently waited with the gay throng at the covert side, when the hounds met not far from the ancestral domain. We can even now see, in our mind’s eye, that glorious winter morning, in the Christmas holiday time, when we won—yes, actually won, the brush! We could walk, even now, after the long lapse of years, to the dear old covert side, and show you the exact spot where that game ‘varmint’ broke cover; we could take you to the very place where the little pony gave us a terrible purl, which caused our eyes to be filled even unto blinding

with yellow clay; we could show you the field where the sheep threw out the pack and caused the (to us, at all events) welcome check; and best of all, we could take you straight to the blacksmith's shop in the village, into which the fox ran for shelter, and where he gave up his life after a good sporting run, but which, being for the most part in a circle, enabled us to be in at the death, and a proud boy was he who rode home to show 'mamma' his first brush! Many a good day with fox and stag, with harrier and drag, and with otter-hounds, have we had since then; but we can honestly say, never did we gain more pleasure and never had we a more 'sporting day.'

You are, dear reader, a lover of the gun—of the rifle? Well, so are we, and noble fun it is; for what could be more glorious than the deer-stalker's life, the free breeze blowing from the purple-headed mountains upon his brow, the springiness of the sweetly-scented heather 'neath his feet, the ever-changing and glorious scenery of hill, glen, moorland, and lake? And, best of all, what more gallant quarry could mortal man desire than the stag with royal head? You pursue smaller game, you say; you cannot afford the expensive luxury of red-deer; and your friends, if they *do* rent a forest, have so many other acquaintances to ask, that you do not often come in for your share of their good things. Well, dear friend, we are exactly in the same box; but then probably, like us, you have some good neighbours who possess grouse moors, and then, 'up wi' the bonnie blue bonnet, an' a!' for the glorious twelfth of August! Did you ever see so bright a sun? did you see in your life before a more lovely view? were birds in the world ever so fat on the table, so strong on the wing, so glorious in life, or so splendid in death, as those first brown grouse of the season? We trow not. And those grand old blackcocks that we can 'do to death' on the twentieth of the same month, are *they*, too, not splendid game? Not, however, so well worthy of our powder then are they as in October, when the ground is barer, the birds themselves in far finer plumage, and when the old cocks in their jetty dress have foregathered in little flocks, and require the most dexterous of 'stalking' before the sportsman can get near enough for his shot: then it is that the black game is worthy of our prowess!

But you prefer the lowland shooting, do you? Your knees, you find, by reason of many years' exercise, do not 'give' quite as freely as they used to do when ascending and descending hills and dales; and maybe your 'wind' is scarcely what it was once



on a time? Well, well, we must all come to that, if so be we live sufficiently long in this world, which, notwithstanding what the croakers may say, has plenty of pleasures—simple pleasures we are talking of—to offer to mankind. So you naturally prefer the partridges, the hare, the wild duck, and the long-billed snipe; and you might do worse, mind you. Do you remember those bright September mornings, when you rose from the bed on which you had been dreaming of the little brown birds in the golden stubbles, to run downstairs to a hurried breakfast, and then to make your way to the said yellow fields and green stretches of knee-high turnips, where the ‘Feast of Saint Partridge’ was to be inaugurated? and do you not recollect how your heart beat double-quick time as the sudden whirr of the startled covey astonished your eyes, and shook your nerves? for you had not noticed old ‘Ponto’ as he stood straight as a dart and motionless as a statue just under your very nose, but hidden by that great, tall patch of fern yonder. And don’t you remember how you used your heavy dog-whip rather unmercifully upon poor patient old ‘Don’s’ brown hide, when he so far forgot himself and his education as to pounce upon that old jack-hare as he lay peacefully dozing in his form? Ah, me! pleasant memories, those. And the wild duck by the frozen marsh, the snipe hiding amongst the sedges by the stream, the woodcock under the big hollybush, the gaily-painted pheasant in the wood, each and all have their pleasant associations of many a happy day gone by, and, may we trust, many a pleasant one in the future!

‘Come, come! what are you dreaming about?’ shouts the General from some hundred yards or so down the bank from where we are standing. ‘I shall land a fish before you even begin, old fellow,’ continues the veteran. And as we waken from our reverie, and pluck the earliest white anemone we have seen, and place it in our coat ‘for luck,’ we hasten down to our old friend, whilst Paddy puts the far-famed ‘orange-grouse’ fly on to our double casting-line.

‘Thunder and lightning! but did you see that?’ says the warrior, but in such a low voice, that does not at all correspond with the excitement apparent in the expression of his cheery face. No, we did *not* see it, for the great thick trunk of a willow-tree was just in our line of vision; but the General’s keen eye *had* observed it, and there was no doubt about it! About what, do you ask? Why, a ‘rise,’ to be sure; ‘and a rise too, of a new-run

fish,' adds the soldier, exultingly. For, you must know, amongst salmon, as amongst everything else in this world, there are varieties, that is, there are fish *and* fish; or, in other words, 'old' fish and 'new' fish, and the said old fish, that is, those which have become mere 'bags of bones,' having deposited their eggs, are now on their way down to the sea to recruit their health. These are the 'kelts' or 'slatterns' which are such a sad trouble to the fisherman, rising continually to his lure, and carrying off his favourite flies, and in the early part of the season you will get nine 'rises' of old, useless salmon, for every one of a good fish. These latter, being new-run from the ocean, are like a streak of silver, as they dash up from the depth of the river, with a swirl like unto a lightning flash, at once—though they touch not the fly—showing to the practised eye that they are 'clean' salmon.

'Now, General, try him again,' for he has been given his five minutes' rest, which is the proper amount of time given as a rule by the angler to rest a salmon before again offering the fly to the notice of a rising fish. The warrior thinks that the gaudy fly with which he tempted the fish was possibly *too* bright, for he says he is sure the salmon rose 'short.'

'Try him wid this, yer honour; this is the boy that should timpt the sulky bast,' observed Paddy, running up with our rod in one hand and a rather dull-looking fly, composed of an orange and grey 'donkey' body and wings of the blue jay and mallard, in the other. No sooner said than done, and the General, up to his knees in the water, with his wading trousers girt round his bulky waist, is soon armed with this new implement of warfare, and waiting for a tiny cloud to cover the brightness of the sun, he makes the cast; rather too far above the salmon, we opine. Even so, *mon Général*; see the line, so lightly thrown by that practised hand, fall soft as a feather upon the curling stream. Watch how the line gracefully curves itself as it is swept round and downwards by the current, describing the arc of a circle until it must have almost passed the spot where that splendid fellow lies. Aye, we thought so; he is lower down. Now for it, General! And once more the slender top of that well-tryed eighteen-foot rod flashes in the sunshine, for the cloud has passed across the face of the sun, the line again is deftly thrown across the curling water, lightly falls that deadly little fly, and we watch with beating hearts the surface of the dear old river. 'Powers above us! saw ye iver the like of that?' shouted Paddy behind

us, as there is a deep boil upon the surface of the stream, a silvery flash for an instant is seen below the water, the good rod bends like the arch of a bridge, and a happy smile passes over the face of the old soldier, as he feels the glorious excitement of being 'fast' in the first spring salmon of the year!

And now, O monarchs of the world! we envy ye not. Ye millionaires of London city! your pleasures are as nothing unto ours. Your golden store is as dross. One such glorious moment of your toiling life, one such run with the 'king of the river,' would be worth millions to your wretched, old, worn-out constitutions. Say, what are your piles of gold, which maybe ye yourselves shall never live to enjoy, when compared with *our* glorious excitement, *our* grand scenery of mountain, meadow, and stream, *our* fresh air, *our* healthy cheek, *our* splendid sport! Away, with ye, dull Care! you have never had, and never *shall* have, any part or parcel with *us*.

'Out of the way, you Paddy! don't you hear?' shouts, or rather yells, the General, as he rushes out of the river, and gains the firmer footing of the green bank above, on which Paddy is standing with open mouth gazing with admiration at the great fish, as it takes a mad run straight across the stream, and ends by throwing its silvery body high into the air, thereby greatly endangering the 'hold' of the hook in its jaw, which, when a fish is fresh run from the sea, is generally tender. 'Sorrow, boys! but he's gone!' yells Paddy, as the salmon falls back on to the surface with a dull thud, and the line for a moment seems slack, as if there were nothing alive at its farther extremity. 'Don't be a fool, Pat!' shouts the warrior, as with a rush like a meteor the gallant salmon, still well hooked, once more bends the limber rod almost double, and whirl! whisk—sh! goes the well-oiled reel, than which no human music can be more delightful to our ears, and out runs the short line to a right merry tune. 'More power to yer elbow, sor!' yells Pat, in ecstasy of delight. 'Tare an' ages, what a fish! follow him, yer honer! follow him!'

No need for such instructions to the General, for had he not in the good old days killed many a mighty salmon on this same water, aye, ere Paddy even saw the light of day? And a right glorious place for such a fight is Macloughlin's stream, deep running and rocky, with here and there ugly and dangerous black-looking rocks raising their heads out of the water, which boils and seethes around their jagged sides—bad spots, by our

faith! for the cutting of the slender gut that holds the gallant fish!

‘Warm work, Walter, my boy—eh?’ says the General, as, with great beads of perspiration streaming down his jolly face, and holding his big rod with one hand—the other on the reel—he follows the gallant salmon at a good round run as it takes its way dead up stream, strong as when first it felt the fatal delusion of the gaudily-coloured steel.

But now is the warrior sadly bothered by great rocks upon the bank, just where the Blackwater makes its rapid way, with a sudden turn almost at right angles, towards the north-east, and the ‘path,’ such as it is, leads over and amongst some of the biggest, and withal the most slippery boulders of rocks possible to conceive. But, with great difficulty and mighty exertions, the soldier keeps his footing and his salmon well in hand at the same time. We and Paddy follow, at a more sedate pace as best we may, the latter still giving all kinds of contradictory directions; for, though cool as a cucumber before a fish is hooked, and one of the best fly-tiers and anglers in the county of Cork, he invariably quite loses his head during the playing of a salmon, though luckily, when it comes to the gaffing thereof, his nervousness at once vanishes and his hand is steadiness itself, and few eyes more keen or gaff more sure than his at the critical moment.

But the struggle must surely soon be over, for he has now been struggling gallantly on the line for full ten minutes. Over, did you say? Not at all! Just look at the game fish now, as he dashes in under the steep bank and causes the General to run frantically backwards, reeling up for dear life the while. Over, you said? Does *that* look as if the fight is over, the battle done? That splendid rush, which bends the rod till the point almost touches the water, which causes the reel to once again discourse the very sweetest of music, as the salmon makes off from the bank, disturbed therefrom by a big stone, judiciously thrown by ourselves to make him ‘get out of that.’ Away, away he goes, straight across the river! By Jove! take care, or all your line will be run out, aye, every inch of your hundred and forty yards, for here the glorious old Blackwater is very wide. ‘Give him the butt, yer honour, for the love of Moses!’ yells Paddy; and the butt being given, turns the foe, baffled, but unconquered still.

Down, down the stream he goes, the warrior following at a



great speed, considering the heavy encumbrance of his waders. Another maddening leap into the air, one more moment of suspense, but he *is* still on; yet another rush across the shining river, and the game is won, the fight at length is over, the 'Enright' greenheart hath done its work right well, the gut hath stood the test—the General triumphantly steers the gallant salmon, bright as a newly-coined silver shilling, into the little shallow bay, amidst the sprouting bulrushes, and Paddy deftly strikes the sharply-pointed gaff deep into that broad, shining shoulder, and proudly lifts him out in triumph, high in air, for—

The deadly gaff was ready. Bravo! steady, Paddy! steady.  
Now proudly lay him down among the flowers upon the lea.

As he struggling lies and kicking, I can see the sea-lice sticking  
To his scales! Ye shades of Walton, what a beauty from the sea!

He fought a gallant fight, he perished in his might:

The river monarch dies a death of glory and of pride.

'A twenty-pounder, Walter, as bright as a sixpence, and in the sea yesterday; worth coming all the way from London for—eh? Even if we never killed another!' In which soliloquy we joyfully agreed with our delighted friend.

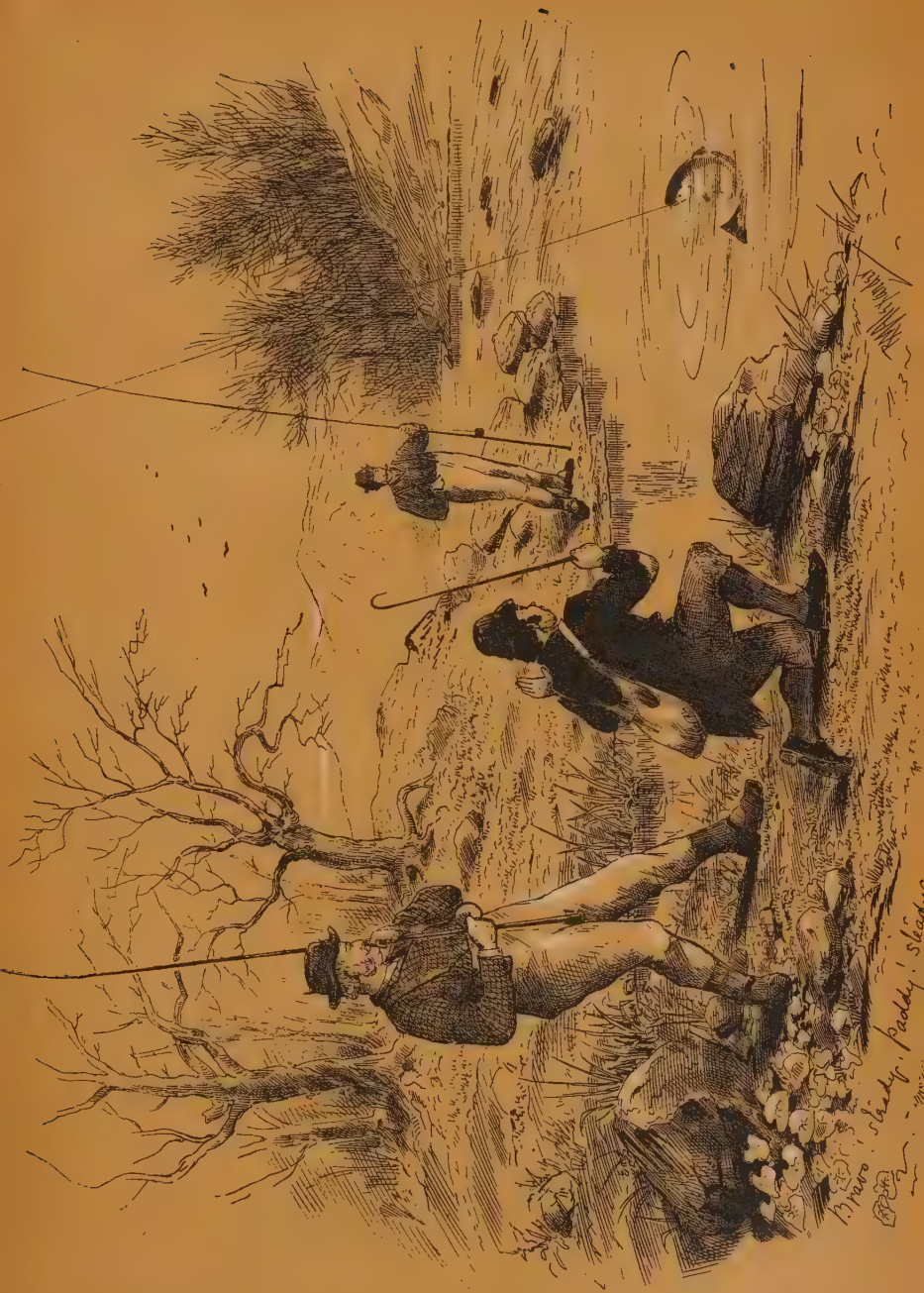
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## WITH THE VIOLETS.

By CUTHBERT BEDE, *Author of 'Verdant Green.'*

**W**ITH the violets comes an end to hunting. Fixtures of hounds are hounded out of the newspapers; and the column headed 'The Chase' is fairly chased away. The violets that herald the birth of spring are strewn upon the grave of the fox-hunter's winter.

The scent of the fox, strong though it may be, cannot compete with the perfume of the violet, that sweet violet—the *Viola odorata*—that appears in the woods, and coppices, and hedgerows when the thrushes and song-birds are charming the air with their melodies. The sweet violets' scent betrays its bloom, even if it is hidden from view in moss and herbage, such as were the 'mosses mixt with violet,' whereon Queen Guinevere's 'cream-white mule his pastern set;' and, though we may not see them, yet we readily perceive 'the smell of violets



Shady Paddy's Shadow

1870



hidden in the green,' of which Tennyson speaks in 'A Dream of Fair Women.'

It is not the paler and later scentless dog-violet—the *Viola canina*—which, by the way, obtains its distinguishing epithet 'dog,' from no connexion with the hound, but merely as a synonym for 'large'—it is not the scentless dog-violet but it is the perfumed sweet violet that scares the hounds from their scent. It is that very same violet, which, through a period of many centuries, has been made into conserves, and unguents, and oil, and even vinegar, and into a syrup that was accepted as a certain cure for infantile cold; and which, when made into sugar, was the fashionable remedy for lung complaints in the days of the Merry Monarch. The sweet violet, however, was in fashion, as a medicine, at a far earlier period; for Pliny prescribed it in cases of gout and spleen; and in Athens it was used as a promoter of sleep, as a strengthener of the heart, and as a moderator of anger. It was a favourite with the classical poets, from the days of Homer to those of Virgil; and it was highly prized by the Romans as the famous Tarentine dye, of which Horace makes mention, '*Lana Tarentino violas imitata venero.*'

Save and except the huntsman and his followers, every one would appear to entertain a special affection for the sweet violet. 'O sweet is the new violet that comes beneath the skies,' as the young Queen of the May told her mother, 'all in the wild March morning,' when she was waiting for the end. And Shakspeare makes frequent mention of it; whether it be when he refers to the old superstition regarding it—

'Lay her i' the earth;  
And, from her fair and unpolluted flesh,  
May violets spring!'

To Perdita's

'Violets dim,  
But, sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,  
Or Cytherea's breath!'

Or the Duke's exquisite simile in *Twelfth Night*:

'That strain again —— it had a dying fall!  
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,  
That breathes upon a bank of violets  
Stealing, and giving odour.'

I may continue the quotation, and say, with the Duke, 'Enough! no more!' for, not only do various other passages suggest them—



selves from the same poet, but from Herrick, downwards to our own day, pages might be pleasantly filled with poetic and apt quotations concerning the sweet violet. But I 'hold my hand,' and hark back to my huntsman, storming at his pack for being in fault, and all through 'them stinkin' violets.'

I wonder how many references will this year be made to 'them stinkin' violets?' yet it is an old joke. Many years before John Leech put the phrase into the mouth of his irate huntsman, in one of his inimitable drawings in the gallery of Mr. Punch; I met with it in an article published in *The Sporting Magazine*, and written by the late Sir John Dean Paul, who was a skilful amateur artist as well as an author. But it is 'them stinkin' violets' that flower over the grave of hunting, and make it a memory of the past. With the perfumed scent of the violet Nature herself proclaims the close of the season. Yet if that season has gone, never to return, its successor may be anticipated with hopefulness; and, if there is pleasure in the prospect, there is also happiness in the retrospect.

With the violets, and the close of the season, come back the memories of that past season's runs; and I think, that if anything was needful to demonstrate to me the popularity of hunting—not that such demonstration is needed, for it has been my happiness to live a country life in hunting counties—I need not go further to look for proof thereof than in the columns of my local newspaper, during the wintry months, from October to March—from cub-hunting to 'them stinkin' violets.' The *Loamshire Journal*, for example, not only chronicles the doings of the famous Loamshire Hounds, but also gives us a second special paper with 'Hunting Notes from Melton and the Shires,' followed up with ample quotations from other journals relative to the runs with other packs. The generality of these are so well written, that I do not wonder at their republication in the form of a volume for the Circulating Library, with Illustrations by Finch Mason, or John Sturgess.

But, there is as much difference among Hunting Correspondents as there is among other classes of special writers for the Press; and it is amusing, when a local scribe is permitted by the courteous editor to see himself in print in the country paper. The meet has been in his own village, and his excitement, thereupon, has found its way into his newspaper report. Ordinarily, he may call a spade a spade, and not an agricultural implement; but, when he has to describe 'a brilliant run with the Loamshire

Hounds,' he indulges in language of the most florid description, which he fondly believes to be acceptable to the initiated, though it may be 'caviare to the general.' Of course, he would not think of calling the hunted animal a Fox. He must convert him into a hunting metaphor, and refer to him as Reynard, or Mr. Reynolds, or Charley, or pug, or the vulp, or the visen. And, after describing the meet, and giving a list of the most noteworthy people 'who were freely bidden to partake of the worthy Squire's unstinted hospitality,' he gets the pack away to Clubberton Gorse; and then, warming to his work, writes something after the following fashion:

'A whimper from the beauties, and away they went with a crash, sterns up; Master Reynard, with the squeakers close at his brush, taking the large enclosures at Pigsworth, and going a regular cracker, as though he meant Tuppington Wood. Here it was bellows to mend in the stiff plough; many of the horses were pumping aloud, and others tailed off. "For'ard! hark for'ard!" was the cry; and the varmint, heavily pressed by the gallant lady pack, pointed for his old haunts at Shuffler's Bottom; but, being headed, made for the Rippleton brook. Here, the worthy Master, on his celebrated "roan," who had been there or thereabouts, from the first, came to grief, and for a few seconds found a watery grave, from which he was rescued, like the comic servant in the dismal play of *The Stranger*,—"Not drowned, but very wet,"' &c. &c.

I wonder what our local greengrocer or shopkeeper would make of this, if I could take him to the Board School, and there compel him, slate in hand, to construe the passage, and turn it into plain English. And yet, I am quite sure that he enjoys the reading of it, though portions of it may be unintelligible; because he knows that it figuratively describes a sport that he would willingly walk miles to get a peep at, if only the opportunity were granted him. He discovers in it that 'touch of Nature that makes the whole world kin.' And, to many a man, — especially of the Mr. Jorrocks' school — such an account must be most acceptable, and its racy, idiomatic language, will sound as the sweetest music, and supply him with the most fascinating reading.

If I may be permitted to quote myself, I should like to reprint some words that I wrote (nearly thirty-five years ago — *when fugaces!* &c.) for my old friend Albert Smith, when he and John Lecch — whom I also had the happiness to know — brought out a shilling periodical called *The Mouth*; Albert Smith doing the

editorial work and a portion of the writing, and John Leech drawing the whole of the illustrations. One of these page-cuts to my paper on 'The Great Dinner-bell Nuisance,' he did me the honour to copy from my own drawing. The periodical had only a brief career of six months, not because it was a failure, but because Albert Smith had made such a tremendous hit by his 'Mont Blanc' entertainment, that he was too much overburdened with work to find time to edit a magazine. In the last number, which contained a page-hunting sketch by Leech, depicting the Hon. Mr. Pincushion of All Saints', Oxford, I had many contributions, both in prose and verse—or 'prose and worse,' as Douglas Jerrold said of Mark Lemon's book—one of which was a burlesque of those country correspondents' accounts of runs with the hounds, of which I have been speaking. Here it is:—

'The truly national sport of Faux-hunting commenced on the 5th of November. We have to record a glorious run on that day with the Hampden Hounds. The meet was held at the Kennels, from whence an adjournment was soon effected to St. John's Wood. Here, after a little trouble and delay, a Faux was put up, and away he went in first-rate style, with the pack in close attendance upon him, the young dogs giving tongue most lustily. The Wood re-echoed to their merry music. Down the Grove went the Faux, but so hard pressed, that even the toddlers were well up to him. Here the distance began to tell upon him, and, when close to the "Eyre Arms," he made for a drain; but, after a short check, the pack were again laid on, and once more he took to the open. His course then lay back through St. John's Wood, along the Avenue Road, and across Barrow Hill, where he was headed to the Regent's Park. Here he made for the pleasure-grounds of one of the great houses in the vicinity, but was speedily ejected by the Master. The Faux then gallantly held on his way, and, after a sharp burst, was finally pulled down near to the spot from whence he had started. The several gentlemen who had "waited" on him, afterwards passed the evening merrily together, Mr. Chummy being in possession of the brush; and it was the subject of general remark that the Fauxes this year were more abundant, and afforded better sport than for some seasons past.'

With the violets there comes an end, in the country newspapers, to such accounts of brilliant runs and hunting adventures and misadventures. And if, in such hunting notes, scraps of Latin are sometimes inserted, and if poetic lines, such as Byron's,

'Fox shall in Britain's future annals live,'

are pleasantly perverted to their writer's purpose, it is as though he would skilfully hint to his readers that a hunting man need

not necessarily forget the classical lore that he picked up at school and college, as pigeons pick up peas; and that he can dabble in literature and use his pen with a power and picturesqueness that shall recall the best descriptions of runs with the hounds by Whyte Melville, Hawley Smart, or Shelsley Beauchamp. Certainly, among the social gains of hunting, we must not forget our indebtedness to the sport for its special contributions to our library shelves, and, in a minor form, to our newspaper reading.

To conclude as I began: With the violets comes the end of the hunting season. The perfumed scent of the modest flower is even more potent than the powerful odour that ruddy Reynard leaves upon his trail as he races for his life from the pursuing pack; and when pinks begin to bud in the garden, it is time for the 'pinks' of the hunting-field to be hung up in wardrobes, to await the advent of another season.

With the violets, the scarlet has to give place to the silk. If brooks, bullfinches, and hurdles, have to be cleared, it must be by the steeplechaser, and not by the hunting man, in a bursting run or in a frolic home. The undulating ridge and furrow, and the wide pastures of the Quorn, Cottesmore, Fitzwilliam, and Pytchley countries, must now be exchanged for the flat-racing 'turf' of Newmarket and Epsom. The jockey jockeys the huntsman, who, like the Locksley Hall dog, can now only 'hunt in dreams;' and as for the first and second whips, as Hamlet says, 'Who would bear the whips,' after the sweet violets have destroyed the whips' work?

But though with the violets there is an end to hunting, yet, if a season deprives us of one sport, its compensating benevolence presents us with another. Though sport be dead, yet long live sport! The saddle's throne is filled throughout the year. Vive le pigskin!

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## BETWEEN TWO STEEPLES.

*By A CHASER.*

**Y**OU know every inch of the country, you say, and could ride it in the fog! Come now, Parson, I know you're clever, but how could you find your way from Slokem-cum-Numbleton here in weather like what we have been experiencing the last few days? It is too much! Oh! hang it! men of your cloth may be privileged to exaggerate a little, but not altogether to bounce us down.'



'I say again, Squire, there was no difficulty in hunting at all to-day with men used to riding carefully to hounds, fog or no fog, and as to my finding my way from Slokem-cum-Numbleton Church—let me see ; ah ! well, to-morrow, if the fog lasts, I'll do it against you for ——. Ah ! it wouldn't do for me to gamble, you know, but the old mare's worth fifty pounds to me—say, will that do?'

'Would you buy back the old mare at that if you lost? for she would be of no use to me, you know.'

'Certainly ! You would have the fifty sooner, for the matter of that, than the mare ; but, you see, " 50*l.* a-side, the Parson up " (if it were to leak out), would not sound well.'

'Then to-morrow afternoon we meet at Slokem-cum-Numbleton Church at two o'clock in the afternoon *sharp*. I would meet you earlier, but I have business in the market at Slokem in the forenoon. And now, then, good-bye. But, I say, who is to be judge?'

'Well, the same man that starts us ; he can very easily drive—and that's one condition, mind, we must leave the road which runs round about and keep to the country. Bring old Farmer Walters ; he's a fair-and-square man, and drives a nice mare. There must be no placing of men, or sounding of horns, or hallooing, or anything that might be called artificial, or out of the jog-trot of parish life. The weights are ——'

'Thirteen stone seven each.'

'And the distance exactly ——'

'From Slokem-cum-Numbleton steeple to my own steeple at Haggleton, outside there. First in the churchyard, either over the wall or through the gate, which will be open. The stakes we know, but you'd better not ask about them, for the reasons I have mentioned.'

'Then to-morrow we meet as agreed upon,' said the Squire, rising to leave ; and as I have business in Slokem I'll bid you good-evening, Parson, and ask you to pray for a fog, for I know every fence between the two steeples.'

Getting into the trap which was standing outside awaiting the Squire, we soon got clear of the Parsonage avenue, when he asked me (his only companion) what I thought of the business. 'The Parson is a fly old magpie,' he added, 'and I am certain has planned some scheme by which he means to do me out of fifty pounds.'

'But how can he do that? you know the country, every inch.'

‘So I do; so I do. But don’t think that it is a matter of *knowledge of country*. Old Pitterbrick’s a catch-bet man, and when he wagers 50*l.*, mind you, he’s made a certainty of it.’

‘I can scarcely believe you; why, it’s one of the most innocent and peacefully rural sights in the world, I assure you, to see him as I did before you came, in the back-garden, by the side of his pond, throwing food to the ducks; and as to betting, why, that must be a fever with him, for he offered to bet me a five-pound note that one duck would outswim another for a crumb of bread.’

‘Did you take him?’ said the Squire, like to tumble out the gig with laughter; indeed, he rolled about so much that he had to pull the mare to a standstill.’

‘Did I take him? No. But what in the name of fortune makes you laugh so loudly?’

‘Was there a yellowish old Aylesbury duck and an old white Rouen drake?’

‘There was! but what of that?’

‘Well, maybe you will not feel inclined to believe it, but these ducks have earned him a good two hundred pounds a-year if they have a penny.’

‘Eggs!’

‘Eggs,’ said the Squire, contemptuously; ‘does the Parson look like a hen-wife? No, he knows business better than that; but let me tell you:—

‘While my house was being repainted, I agreed to dine and stay with him overnight. Well, it was in August, and after dinner we strolled into the garden together, and sat down beside the duck-pond, where the Parson commenced to chuck pieces of bread into the water, in order to see them make races together. Nice, simple, clerical amusement, I thought; but Parson Pitterbrick’s a deep one. “It’s not fair,” I said, “not to give the duck a chance. You should allow mares and fillies three yards extra.” “Do you think so?” said he. “I’ll back the duck against the drake a full length of the pond for a sovereign.” “Done with you!” said I; and away went the bit of bread, and away went the dirty yellowish old Aylesbury and the Rouen drake, and the latter just stretched out his neck in time to gobble the crumb and save the money. So far so good. Well, next morning, after breakfast, we found ourselves smoking a pipe by the pond, and the duck and drake at their own game, and as hungry as hawks. They’d been starved on purpose. By

Jupiter, they had ! Well, we started wagering again, and, of course, I stuck to the old drake, when all at once he says, "That form was wrong last night, and I don't mind backing the duck for fifty." "Done with you !" says I, "for I don't like losing good things." "Fifty," says he, "no gammon ;" looking a mighty sight more serious than he is over a sermon. "Fifty on the drake," said I ; and away went the bit of bread, and away went the two birds for the thirty-feet swim. Well, hang me if the duck didn't stretch out her little neck on the post, as it were, and gobble up the crumb and my fifty pounds, after a rare race. By Gad ! you never saw anything at Epsom, Ascot, or Goodwood like it. Well, I paid him, but, by the powers, I never have had roast duck like that since.'

'How did you account for it ?'

'Well, I couldn't make it out ; but just as they finished he exclaimed, "Bravo, my little one ! I knew you would do it with the *weight off*."'

'Weight off, Parson ?' says I. 'What do you mean ?'

'Oh !' says he, quite blandly, 'you can't expect to *have duck's eggs for breakfast and win your money*.'

'Hang me if she hadn't overnight laid the egg I had for my breakfast ; not much as weight goes, but it was a mighty heavy load on my stomach all that forenoon. However, I have sworn to have him at his own game, and, though I don't know what he means yet, I have half a guess, or I wouldn't have closed with him. You just wait and see. You think, after that, I have thrown good money after bad, but between this and to-morrow at two o'clock I fully expect to have made myself master of the situation.'

Next morning opened with some signs of the sun, but the fog was so thick that it might have been the moon for all any one could determine. At breakfast-time the Squire was absent, but just as I had tapped my last egg, laughing over his duck-and-drake story, he appeared, with a face beaming all over.

'I told you he was a deep one, and I was right ; however, we shall see. I only hope that the fog doesn't lift.'

'By-the-by, what were the conditions as to guides ?'

'No placing of men or flags, or sounding of horns, or hallooing, or anything that might be called out of the way or artificial.'

'Just so ; out of the jog-trot of parish life didn't he say ?'

'Exactly.'









‘Ah! well, we’ll see. The mare’s standing outside, and you had better jump in and come to Slokem market. My groom will take over the old horse to the steeple, and we’ll pick up old Walters, who is to be judge.’

In about three hours afterwards we were all together, wandering about in the pea-soup atmosphere round Slokem-cum-Numbleton steeple, the Parson in black, with brown breeches and gaiters, on the mare; the Squire, in his old red-rag, seated on the old horse. From a farmyard close at hand old Walters had fished out a set of sack-weighing machines, and on these both of the competitors were duly weighed out. The Squire, being short, produced from his top-coat a small, round bit of metal, which just made him up, he said. ‘I think I can take this little bit with safety,’ was his remark; ‘it’ll be useful in the end, I think.’

Drawing alongside each other at the cross-road, Farmer Walters cried ‘Go!’ and the two disappeared in the fog over the hedge at the same place exactly at a quarter to three o’clock. They might have soared aloft for all we know, but in order to tell our story we must follow them. In the grass-field, a stretch of a quarter of a mile, the two stuck together; and then the Parson wheeled sharp round and chose a line of his own, wanting seemingly to go through the fog by himself, Scarcely had he done so than was heard the slow ding dong of a funeral bell.

‘That’s it now, mare,’ said the Parson; ‘I haven’t got much of an ear for music, old lass, but I’m not far wrong if that is not Haggleton Church bell a-tollin’ for the funeral of poor old Daddy Hodge, the woodcutter. Ha! ha! how the Squire will wince when he pays me that fifty pounds. The “ducks” will be nothing to it!’

‘While the Parson was steering in the direction from which the sound came, the Squire was quietly feeling his way, according to his own knowledge of the country, by aid of the water-courses and the run of certain fences he remembered, and was quite happy with himself, laughing and saying, ‘Ho! ho! how the old Parson will kick at losing the price of his mare!’

Nearer and nearer the Parson brought the sound of the bell, never taking stock of stone-wall, hedge, or landmark of any kind, and then, with a grand jump into the roadway, flew the churchyard wall, and found himself opposite *the Haggleton Belfry*? No; but the belfry of the Church of Acorndale. For a

moment or two he couldn't understand it ; but, yes, there were the names on the tombstones, all different from those in his own. With a hesitating voice, as if afraid of the answer, he at length blurted out :

'Isn't this where old Hodge, the woodman, is to be buried ?'

'Well, Parson,' said the old fellow who was still swinging away at the bell-rope, 'you be a funny one, you be ! and them waiting for ye for the service at Haggleton !'

'And why, in the name of the Furies, do they not ring the bell at Haggleton ? and who, in the name of Fates, are you ringing here for ?'

'Well, yer see,' said the man, 'it's this way, Parson. Somebody this mornin' gone and stole the clapper out of your own bell at Haggleton, and as it wouldn't do to bury poor old Daddy without a ringing of some kind, and this place being only a mile or so away, they thought it would be as well to ring the bell here. But I'se think, sir, ye should hurry up, for they'll be all awaitin' !'

It was certainly not a word out of the Church service which the Parson used as he jumped his mare out of the churchyard, and galloped down the road in the Haggleton direction, reckless of fog or of danger ahead in any shape. Soon he found himself at his own church gate ; but, alas ! there were others before him.

'You're just in time for the service, Parson, but the Squire's been a bit before you. It ain't so easy ridin' through a fog as you think,' said old Walters.

The Parson Pitterbrick said nothing, but entered the church and performed the service solemnly, while a lad led his mare to her stable. He then sought the Parsonage, without asking the Squire or the old farmer to come inside. Well did he remember the former saying, as he placed that little four-pound-weight, the missing bell-clapper in his pocket, '*this will about save me the race.*'

Next morning a lad brought a letter addressed to Squire Boltvill. It was as follows :—

HAGGLETON PARSONAGE,

*Friday.*

DEAR SIR,—Enclosed is a cheque for 50*l.*, which be good enough to acknowledge, as I leave this place for ever this afternoon. When one like myself has toiled hard for fifteen years in the sacred cause of truth and honour, only to find that the very head of his parishioners steals

the tongue of his church-bell on the morning of a funeral, he may well deem it high time to seek fresh fields and pastures new for his labours.

I am, yours truly,

JOHN PITTERBRICK.

‘Fresh *fools* and pastures new he must mean,’ said the Squire, laughingly. ‘There’s his receipt, and I only hope he’ll take that old yellow Aylesbury duck and the old white Rouen drake along with him. However, that’s a well-won fifty for my first and last race “between Two Steeples.”’

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## THE SEASON HAS SPED!

### A HUNTING SONG.

By CAPTAIN CLARK KENNEDY, *late Coldstream Guards, Author of ‘Robert the Bruce,’ &c.*

(*To the tune of ‘HERE’S TO THE MAIDEN OF BASHFUL FIFTEEN!’*)



HE season has sped on the fleetest of wings,  
The sport we love dearest is over!  
The glade with the note of the nightingale rings,  
And there’s peace for the ‘little red rover!’  
But give him a cheer!  
At the fall of the year  
He’ll lead us some dances again, never fear!

No longer the woods to the cry of the pack  
Re-echo with music the sweetest!  
No longer we’ll see, trotting up on his hack,  
Our master,—of masters the neatest!  
Toast him we ought!  
He is bred from the sort  
We keep in Old England to show us the sport!

The bluebell so lovely is nodding its head  
To the primroses modest and yellow.  
The violets hide in their velvety bed  
And the sunshine is cheery and mellow.  
But winter for me!

(Now don’t you agree?)

For the hounds do not hunt in the summer, you see!

Oh! light in November our slumbers have been,  
And we dreamed of the glories of sporting:  
But now we sleep on, for the woodland is green,  
And no game to be found for the courting!



*The Season has Sped !*

But never despair—

If stormy or fair—

We'll after the fox when the covert is bare !

Here's luck to each friend, to the hunter, the hack,

To the huntsman, the whips, and their horses !

And 'Sultan' whose nose is the best in the pack !

To each hound that old 'Sultan' endorses !

Pass the word round !

'Here's to the hound !

And here's to the covert where foxes abound !'

Then fill me a bowl to the joys that are fled,

And here's to the run of the season !

And a bumper—a brimmer—to him who has bred

Both foxes and pheasants in reason !

Long may he reign !

Cheer him amain,

Till rafter and ceiling shall rattle again !

Adieu ! for awhile the delights of the run !

Adieu to the cheery old faces !

In town for your money there's plenty of fun,

So perhaps we shall meet at the Races !

Epsom for thee !

Ascot for me !

And Goodwood is jolly, you'll surely agree !

But soon shall the beauties of summer-time fade,

And the breezes of autumn be blowing ;

Again shall we hear 'Tally-ho !' from the glade,

Our faces expectancy showing.

Let the toast pass ;

Fill up your glass,

And 'Here's to the pace we'll fly over the grass !'

Then long may we dwell in our happy old land,

The glories of fox-hunting sharing !

Our seat in the saddle, our bridle in hand,

And scarlet the colour we're wearing !

'Hark ! Tally-ho !

For-rard we go !

And after the hounds in the valley below !'

## SPORTING ADVENTURES.

*By 'SYKO.'*

HAVE, from force of circumstances which the reader will understand later on, been more a student of nature than of books ; in my idle moments, however, I have occasionally glanced into some work that I may chance to have found in my way, and these, I must confess, have been chiefly of the yellow-backed order. I have remarked that these books usually contain somewhere near the beginning a description of the personal appearance of the hero or heroine of the plot, while their moral or immoral qualities are left to be developed by the progress of the plot itself. I conclude, therefore, that the orthodox way of beginning these adventures would be by describing, as far as lies in my power, the appearance of my hero.

If there be a hero I am he, and although, to an individual of my native modesty and retiring disposition, the task of describing my own physical and moral beauties is a somewhat invidious one, yet, as I have frequently heard it remarked that I am an old-fashioned sort, and the type of a race that is daily becoming rarer, I will endeavour to give a fair and impartial description of my appearance.

I stand seventeen and a half inches at the shoulder, my girth is twenty-three inches, from the base of my skull to the tip of my nose is nine inches, the breadth between my ears is four and a half inches, the length from the tip of my nose to the end of my back is thirty-five and a half inches, from the end of my back to the end of my—alas ! it must come—*tail*, eleven and a half inches, my colour is of the purest white, my weight is twenty-eight pounds, and you have guessed it—I am a DOG.

Yes, it is true, a dog I am ; but, reader, do not lift your—l—I mean, curl your lip, and refuse me your sympathy on that account, for I am not an ordinary dog ; and although in these practical and enlightened days the value of a pedigree—among you men, at all events—is somewhat depreciated, yet I am not a little proud of the fact, that I can trace my ancestors back through many generations of a high and sustained lineage, and

I have endeavoured, in all the varying circumstances of my chequered life, to behave in a manner worthy of my parents, and to keep in mind that old, and, alas! too-little heeded saying, '*Noblesse oblige.*'

Notwithstanding my aristocratic birth and connexion, I fancy my family must have become somewhat impoverished, for my earliest recollections carry me back to a heap of straw in an out-house, near a long range of stabling: here, together with three brothers and a sister, I received from my mother those early cares so essential to our well-being in after life. Of my father I can remember but little; indeed, I only saw him on one or two occasions, and on those he took but little notice of us: he was always in a hurry; he would bustle in, sniff round the place, poke his nose into every corner, and depart as if to him time was a thing of the greatest value.

The first few months of my life were uneventful, and I occupied them principally in successfully overcoming the usual infantine complaints.

I was about three months old, and was fast becoming independent of my mother, when one summer morning as I lay half-asleep in the sun, I suddenly 'smelled a smell, which I had never smelled before;' it had a most peculiar effect upon me, a succession of shivers seemed to run down my spine, and I felt irresistibly compelled to shut my teeth tight upon something. I was very much puzzled, and not a little alarmed, when, on looking round to ascertain the cause of the odour which had such a peculiar effect upon me, I saw a pair of small, but piercingly bright black eyes, glaring upon me from behind a long tapering face, adorned with a most ferocious pair of whiskers.

Like lightning the thought flashed through my brain, that this must be one of our hereditary foes the rats, of whom I had often heard my mother speak in such bitter and contemptuous terms; the same instantaneous flash of thought conjured up in my young mind vivid pictures of the stories I had heard from my mother. I saw before me a twelve-foot ring, surrounded with high boards; in it stood my father, ankle-deep in rats, covered with a hundred gory gashes, and dealing death and destruction to the accursed race, amid the plaudits of the surrounding crowd. As these thoughts flashed through my mind, every drop of blood within me boiled, my breath came short and sharp—my resolve was fixed, and without more ado I hurled myself upon the foe.

To do him justice, I was met with a courage at least equal to my own, for before I could fairly reach him his teeth met in my cheek; the pain was intense, but my blood was up, and working my way in I got a hold of him. Oh, the rapture of that moment! nothing in after-life has ever equalled it. I have since then fought battles innumerable, some of them terrible ones, as the sequel will show; but never, never, have I felt the ecstatic thrill which ran through me when I first held between my teeth a living, writhing foe; and when I realised the fact, that if I could only hold on long enough I could *kill*.

With a strength and passion beyond my age I closed my jaws upon my adversary; but I was still young and weak, and I could not master him. Again and again he bit me, and I nearly fainted with the pain and loss of blood, but '*bon sang ne peut mentir*,' and I held resolutely on: at last he bit me in the tongue; the anguish of the wound drove me nearly mad, but, collecting myself for a desperate effort, I literally jammed my fangs into his skull. I felt a convulsive shudder run through his body, and my foe was dead. I lay bleeding and exhausted after my exertions, when I was gently lifted up by the scruff of my neck, somebody patted my head and said, 'Well done, little 'un! by Jove, you *are* a good one! What will you take for him, John?'

'Well, sir, he's three months old; he's by the celebrated bull-terrier Champion Turk out of Birmingham Beauty, and you see what a real gritty one he is. I couldn't take no less than fourteen sovereigns for 'im.'

'Umph! that's a good deal of money, John; however, he's a good-bred one, and I think he's worth it: so bathe his head, and put him some hay in the back of the dog-cart, and I'll take him with me.' And so reader, my infancy ended, and my real life began.

After a rapid trot of, as near as I could guess, about an hour and a half, the dog-cart drew up at the door of a large, rambling, old-fashioned house, the door of which was instantly opened by a man in livery, who was directed by my new master to take the 'puppy' carefully out of the cart and put him in the smoking-room. This was accordingly done, and I soon found myself deposited on the hearthrug, in, I think, the snuggest and cosiest room I have ever seen; it was fairly large, with a low ceiling, and a large bow-window opening out on to a smooth, green lawn. The fire-place was wide and old-fashioned, the walls were hung all round with first-rate sporting sketches of every description; over what my master was pleased to term his



writing-table hung the pictures of two favourite hunters, and over the frame of each picture were the mask and brush of some varmint old 'Charley.' I had not completed my survey of the room when I heard a light, quick step approaching; the door of the room was thrown open, and my master entered—ah! my poor master! even then, when I hardly knew him, I could not help liking him; for what men call our instinct, refusing in their self-conceit to allow us the possession of reasoning powers, told me that he was a true, generous, and brave-hearted man, which I afterwards found to be the case. He was a sportsman in the best and truest sense of the word; not one of those fast, flashy, swearing, drinking, gambling blackguards, who bring discredit not only to themselves but to whatever branch of sport they pretend to 'go in for;' but an honest, manly, plucky Englishman, fond of sport for sport's sake, riding as straight at life's fences as he did at the 'oxers' of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire; ever ready to help a friend in need. But there! much as I loved my master, others may not care about hearing his praises sung, so I will sum up his qualities very briefly: he was—an English Gentleman.

I grew and prospered in my new abode; I became strong, and was always ready for a 'row,' so much so, that I think I must have Irish blood in me: at all events I often heard my master say, 'he never saw such a devil in all his life.' We, that is my master and I, soon became inseparable; wherever he went I accompanied him, and in this way I saw a good deal more of 'life' than falls to the share of an ordinary dog.

If there were one sport that my master loved better than another, it was 'hunting:' who doesn't love it, though?

Dog though I be, I know all about it, for one of my best friends was a superannuated old foxhound, who initiated me into all the mysteries of the chase, and who often whiled away the time as we lay dozing in front of the fire with anecdotes of his hunting days, which, I blush to say it, almost made me wish I was a man. I can sympathise with you in the pleasure of bestriding a 'good 'un.' I know that the soft swish of the air on your face as you fly a rasper is sweeter than any woman's kiss. I know the thrill that the shrill 'C—o—p forrard! away!' and the clear twang of the horn, send flying through every fibre of your being, and then, confess it—strictly *entre nous*, if you like—but still, acknowledge the pleasure of knowing that you've 'pounded the lot,' and are striding along, with all your best

friends behind you, your horse going strong and free, shaking his head and reaching at his bridle, a tough old dog-fox on ahead, and a flying pack running 'packed' and mute, half a field in front and a hundred yards to your right. Yes! I know all this; and what's more, I've been out hunting myself, quite on the strict Q. T. And I shan't easily forget my first appearance in the hunting-field, for I signalised it by committing the one 'unpardonable sin.' I did it in ignorance though, for at that period of my life I had not benefited by the sage counsels of my foxhound friend. Reader! I killed a fox, and this is how it happened.

I had long been devoured with a burning curiosity to know what my master did when he went out hunting, and I had tried to get some information about it from the hunters in our stable, but they simply sneered at my ignorance, and went on chumping their corn; so I determined to find out for myself. One morning, accordingly, I watched my master canter off on his cover hack, and slipped off quietly after him. I kept well out of the way till we got to the meet, and then hid myself in a hollow old oak, that I found handy. From my hiding-place I saw it all. I saw the red coats come jogging up, I saw the hounds thrown into cover, I heard for the first time that grandest of all music, the deep full note of a foxhound. I saw 'Master Charley' slip quietly out with a knowing whisk of his brush; he came close past my hiding-place; I could have laid hold of him then, only I wanted to see more, and I did see it too, for I saw the hounds dash out of cover not fifty yards behind him. I saw 'Master Charley' redouble his pace and slip over the ridge and furrow, with the speed and ease of a thoroughbred, as he caught the sound of the horn. I saw hats shoved well down on to their owners' heads, cigars thrown away, feet rammed home in the 'irons;' half-a-dozen men single themselves out from the crowd, and make a simultaneous charge in line, at a great black, hairy, blackthorn fence, with a ditch towards you, and Lord knows what the other side. I saw my master swing over a great hog-backed stile in the corner without an effort, and stride away, on a line of his own, straight after the hounds; and then, where lately had been so much life and animation, came perfect silence, and I slunk off home, feeling deeply dejected that I could not join in the chase.

I had been gone about half-an-hour, and was slinking quietly along a hedge, when I heard a slight footfall on the

other side. I instantly lay down and peered through, thinking it might be a rabbit coming my way; when, what should I see but Master Charley himself! but not the spruce and sporting-looking gentleman I had seen swinging gaily out of cover some half-hour before—oh, dear me! no. His mouth was open, his tongue rolling out, his brush down, and there was a weary, hopeless sort of a shamle, instead of the free, elastic stride, with which he had started. I was already in a bad temper, the hedge was thin, I dashed through and seized him by the throat before he knew anything about it; and lucky it was for me that he did not, for, tired though he was, I think he would have been more than my match if he could have shaken me off. He couldn't though; I had a good grip, and I never let go. We tussled and rolled over one another; he writhed and kicked in every way; but his hour was come, and fighting grim and mute to the last he died. I felt rather proud of myself, and seriously thought about dragging him home, when oh, horror!—I suddenly remembered some remarks I had heard my master make about some blackguard who had killed a fox, and simultaneously I reflected, that as they had brought such a lot of other dogs out to kill him, perhaps they wouldn't like my interfering—so I flew home as fast as I could; and I had not been there very long when my master and a lot of friends came riding in to 'have a drink,' and I heard one of them say: 'Capital thing that, wasn't it, Tom?' and then the fearful words fell on my ear—'Yes! if it hadn't been for that d—d dog. I wonder what dog it was? How old George did swear! Enough to make him too, wasn't it?'

I got to know old George afterwards. I dare say most of you men know him too. There's a man for you! A good many 'seasons' have passed over George's head, and you perhaps may be in the strength and prime of youth, but if you try and follow 'George' over the great ragged fences of Northamptonshire, you'll find the 'old 'un' is a 'rum one to follow, a bad one to beat' I can tell you. And, moreover, he knows the doings of 'Charley' better almost than that wily animal himself; time after time I've seen him (yes, I often went out on my own account), when any other huntsman would have given up in despair, hit 'it' off again, and finally kill, on the coldest scenting-day imaginable. I can remember one day in particular, we had found a fox early in the forenoon, and got him away; the pace was pretty good the first half-dozen fields, when all of a sudden one of those incomprehensible atmospheric changes took place, the

scent became shifty and uncertain, and finally, almost *nil*. The hounds could only run a few hundred yards at a time, and then even their keen noses were baffled; every one thought it was 'no go,' when George suddenly lifted his hounds, galloped away as hard as he could for nearly *two miles*, and that without a 'Halloo' or a 'hat' to help him, and actually clapped his hounds right smack on top of the fox. Ah, well! 'Good wine needs no bush,' and it goes without saying that 'George' is the 'Prince of Huntsmen.' I don't drink myself, but I'll dig up a bone I've been keeping a long time in the garden, and eat it 'to George's health.'

I have heard such a lot of stories about George, I could fill a book with them I think. I dare say you know most of them though, but I remember hearing him tell my master one day how he tried to shoot a rabbit, and I think I can give it in pretty nearly his own words; he had come over with a pup, for us to 'walk,' and my master asked him if he'd like to have a turn at the rabbits!

'No, thank ye, sir,' said George; 'I did try to shoot a rabbit once, but I didn't make much of a hand of it.'

'How was that, George?'

'Well, sir, I was standing at my door one evening, and I see a regular litter of young rabbits playing about; and I thinks to myself, "Young rabbits makes a goodish sort of a pie, and I likes pie;" so I gets a gun, and I rests it again a tree, and I takes a good aim, for I wasn't much of a shot running; well, I pulls the trigger, the gun blows up, the rabbit runs away, and I gets my wrist all cut to pieces!'

Here's another, and it must be the last:—

Whenever 'George' had had an extra good day—a regular burster, in fact; after hounds were fed, horses and stables done up, and everything put straight, he was in the habit of celebrating the event (and is still, I hope) with a glass or two of particularly fine old port that the 'Master' had given him. Well, one day they had a 'clipper;' they got home late at night, and George settled down to his fire and his port. The two combined sent him off to the land of dreams; the fire burnt out, the room got cold, and George slept on; at last he awoke, and 'couldn't make out the line of country anyhow,' when he spied the bottle in the moonlight. He rose to the situation at once, and, shaking his fist at it, said, 'Drat yer, I'll finish yer!' and he did. I need hardly add, that his 'foxes' are tackled in the same spirit.



Talking of foxes, it's astonishing what queer places they will take refuge in when hard pressed; and I remember one day seeing a very 'severe' run finished on the top of the piano in a young-ladies' school: there were only two or three men, and one of the whips 'up.' The fox scrambled through a hedge into the road, with the hounds close behind him, whipped sharp to the left, up the principal street of the quiet little country town of B——n; the leading hound made a snap and a plunge, when, as a last resource, 'Poor Charley' jumped into a low window that stood invitingly open, and landed, with two hounds after him, right in the middle of a 'Tonic Sol-fa,' and scattering a bevy of beauties, jumped on the top of a piano. There was no end of a scrimmage in the ladies' academy, and a much more liberal display of ankles than is usual in such august precincts. However, the timely arrival of the whip soon put matters on a different footing, and the presentation of the 'brush' to the worthy mistress, which she accepted with much hesitation and many blushes, effaced all unpleasant recollections on her part.

I remember . . . . . Dear me! there's Mr. Fores shouting out to 'Tell that brute to stop barking,' so I mustn't bow-wow any more; but before I 'kennel up' there's one thing I should like to say. Times are bad, I know, but if by any chance any of you haven't paid your subscription to 'Hounds' now is the time to do it, and let those who've got plenty harden their hearts, and send a bigger cheque than usual, to help make up the deficiency caused by their unlucky brother-sportsmen, whom bad times, no rents, or an awful facer at the 'back-end,' have exiled from the Hunting Man's Paradise.

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## HIS FIRST FIG.

*By C. TREBLA.*



ALL right, Jack! Topper says we've got leave after all. So now, old boy, shut up that fusty old Hindoo document and get your traps together. I'm off to see if Robinson and Smith are ready to start to-night, and will be back in a twinkling.'

This announcement was made by Fred Jones, who, without pausing for a reply, immediately darted out of the room, half pulling down the purdah as he charged through the doorway.

All this haste and excitement had reference to a long-pro-

dear  
 friends,  
 we have  
 many  
 names  
 which  
 may  
 be  
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 been  
 thinking  
 of  
 them  
 much  
 of  
 late

Your  
 friend  
 Wm. Lloyd Garrison





jected sporting trip, which had been arranged and re-arranged a dozen times during the preceding month. The *dramatis personæ* were Jones, Brown, Robinson, and Smith; four good old English names, which will serve our present purpose as well as any other. Jack Brown, who could sign himself Captain —th Foot, was naturally of quiet disposition, fond of books, and a good 'all-round' man, of medium height, and a build that bespoke activity. Fred Jones, the herald of the important news just given, was a subaltern of the same regiment. He was a 'griff,' whose experience of India was limited to a few months, and being of a sanguine and excitable temperament, he frequently acted upon impulse, and paid the usual penalties.

Robinson, called by his familiar friends 'Sloper,' was a long, thin, sunburnt man, who appeared to glide through life without an effort, yet invariably managed to be 'all there' in a good thing. He had been eight years in India; the greater portion of which time he had spent serving with an Indian cavalry regiment, and had seen some active service on the frontier. Smith was a Lieutenant of Artillery, who was known as 'Faddy,' from the fact of being rather small of stature and very smart; continually inventing something or another, which (judging from results) no one appeared to want or care for, and from which he himself never reaped any benefit.

These four worthies had arranged to spend a happy time in the jungle on the first favourable opportunity, and had selected a spot within a ride of the station for their first camp, where pigs were plentiful, as well as other game, both fur and feather. Fred's entry and exit had been so suddenly and rapidly executed that Jack had no time to speak before he again found himself alone; and, ere he had time to summon his 'bearer' (confidential servant), in order to give instructions as to tents, guns, horses, &c., Fred reappeared.

'Tell you what it is, old fellow, we're going to have a glorious time. Sloper's shikaree has just come in with *khubar* (news). A splendid sounder comes down every night into the valley, close to our camping-ground—an old *tusker* at least forty inches. And, I say, Jack! I'm going to buy Tommy Hawker's "Stingo" this very morning.'

Fred was a tyro, and of that temperament which *will* buy experience. This being well known to Jack, he considered it useless to argue the point of the inadvisability of so doing—for although 'Stingo' had always behaved well, he felt that the time



when he could do so no longer was fast drawing near. 'Stingo,' therefore, passed into Fred's hands, and, during the forenoon, all was bustle at the bungalows of our sportsmen; for although most of the necessaries had been provided, still, when it came to the time for despatching the camp fixings, servants, horses, &c., many were the omissions which had to be made good.

Our party was fortunate enough to obtain the use of half-a-dozen commissariat elephants, most of which were well accustomed to the howdah, and steady. It happened, however, that one of them was in a very bad humour, and no sooner was his load packed, and he was allowed to rise, than he shook everything off again. After several useless attempts to start him, his 'mahout' asked to be allowed to get him into a good temper. 'By all means, and the quicker the better,' was the reply. So our friend, the '*tuckrar*' (contrary) elephant, was quietly taken to a tree, as big round as a man's body, and told by his driver to pull it down. Leaning his head against it, and grasping with his trunk to get a purchase, he set to work, alternately pulling and pushing; and, after a few minutes, the tree began to loosen at the roots. Encouraged by this, the animal redoubled his attack, and presently brought the tree down. This appeared to restore his equanimity, for when his mahout led him back to the bungalow the things were replaced on the pad, and he went away as quietly as if nothing had happened.

By 12 a.m., everything being ready, our friends had the satisfaction of seeing their traps start for the 'happy hunting-ground;' and what with elephants, horses, dogs, servants, &c., one might almost have imagined a small army on the move. At 4 p.m. our sportsmen met at Jack's bungalow, and in a few minutes all were mounted and on their way to the —th's mess, where they were met by a crowd of sympathising friends. It had been previously arranged, that two days after the camp had been formed a number of fellows from the station should ride out and join the party in a day's pig-sticking, so this subject formed the topic of conversation at mess. At length, when Soda's and B.'s had taken the place of the ancient stirrup-cup, our friends took leave, and, after a slight difference of opinion between Fred and his pony, got away in the highest spirits: even Sloper, usually so calm, was moved. He was mounted on a ewe-necked *Wazeerie* horse, which he had brought with him from the Punjab frontier, and which, despite his habit of star-

gazing, was a first-class animal on a long journey. Jack rode a stout Burmah pony. Faddy a *Battery Caster*, and Fred a Deccan pony of singular beauty. Some of these little Deccanees are as pretty as Arabs, and as game.

A ride of fifteen miles brought our sportsmen to their camp, which was pitched on the banks of a river, where they found things in fair order considering circumstances; and after dinner a consultation was held as to the arrangements for the morning. Several local hunters were present, and the subject fully discussed. It was intended to occupy their present position for about a week before moving off to 'pastures new.' Faddy had brought with him a sketch-map of the country; by the aid of which they laid out their programme. A hank (drive) was fixed upon for the following day at a favourable spot, some distance away from the pig-sticking ground, and the day after was to be devoted to the first club meet of the season.

The camp fire had its usual attractions, and many were the anecdotes related.

'I say, Mac,' said Fred to an old comrade, 'do tell us what happened about that muggur which you and your fellows brought alive into camp.'

'Well, if you have never heard it, I will tell you. When stationed at Jubblepor, some two years ago, a few of our fellows being out on an expedition similar to the present one, wished to see what they could do with an old muggur (alligator) which frequented a part of the river close by. And this is what happened. The muggur has a particular *penchant* for dogs; which being well known, we determined to offer him a canine delicacy by way of a bait. A dog was therefore provided by the villagers, and the tempting morsel was fixed to a triangle of hooks, manufactured by the village smith for the occasion; and having attached thereto a couple of fathoms of light chain with a good long rope on the end, we proceeded to a pool, which was well known to be the favourite resort of the wily reptile. The bait was thrown in after the fashion of a night-line, the rope buoyed with a log of wood by way of a float, and the free end secured to a tree. It is the habit of the muggur, after seizing his prey, to take it down and lie on it, perhaps for hours before making his meal; doubtless he is an epicure, and obtains great pleasure in contemplating the delights of what he is about to receive. Hence we, in the capacity of "jolly anglers," did not consider it expedient to imitate the bank fishers, and wait for a bite or

nibble, but left our line to take care of itself, and went off in pursuit of other game.

‘Returning next morning to our fishing-ground, we failed for some time to discover our float ; which circumstance greatly encouraged us. We hunted down stream ; it was not there. We knew, by the rope not being entirely payed out, that it should not be far off ; so we hunted up stream, and ere long it was discovered almost submerged over a deep hole at the head of the pool. Getting hold of the end of the rope, we put on a good strain ; in fact, gave him “the but,” and found that we were fast into something. Whether a dead rock or a live crocodile was the subject of eager conjecture. We pulled and hauled in several directions, but without result. We threw big rocks into the pool. We tugged up and we tugged down, but not an inch could we gain. Whilst taking a spell for breath and further deliberation, our never-failing Sloper (who by the way had not uselessly expended his energies) said something to one of the natives, who dashed off at top speed towards camp ; then gravely remarked, as he seated himself on a smooth stone, that we might as well smoke a pipe until it came. “What’s coming?” eagerly demanded the irrepressible Tom. “Why! an elephant to be sure” replied he. “Come now, that’s almost too good! an old elephant is pretty quick, I know, but I don’t believe he will turn his trunk into a fishing-rod, even to oblige you.”

We had not long to wait before the elephant made his appearance, and the rope was speedily made fast to him ; when, turning his back upon the pellucid waters he strode off, but soon found more to pull at than the “Bombay” end of a rope. But putting his shoulder to it, something appeared reluctantly to yield. Steadily and surely the float approached the bank. All was now intense excitement. Standing round with our spears by way of gaffs, we were prepared to despatch the monster. The float was now on shore, and the muggur rising to the surface lashed the water into perfect foam. Finding himself at a still greater disadvantage off the bottom, he again descended, and, judging from the extra strain on the rope, made a final stand for it. In another minute he was high and dry, being dragged quite against his own sweet will in the opposite direction to the one he wished to take. Really, he was a very strong beast ; but the superior weight of the elephant rendered all resistance useless ; still he was right to try, for, had the line parted he might possibly have got back again, although he had

a fathom of chain in his inside, and the hooks to boot. However, as the line did not part, he was eventually secured to a tree, and, after making a few efforts to free himself, assumed an air of sullen quietude. What was to be done with him? was now the question, and after many suggestions, it was decided that he should be accommodated with a hackary (country cart) or two, if his tail required it, and conveyed as a living trophy to the station. This was accordingly done. The whole of the village had turned out to assist in securing and tying him down with ropes; so many, indeed, that he looked as though some leviathan spider had been at work. It must not be supposed that he submitted to this treatment quietly; on the contrary, he frequently entered his protest in a manner which left no doubt on the minds of all present as to his desires.

‘Now, as time presses, I must finish my story by stating that he was borne triumphantly to our station, where he excited great curiosity, and ended his days a few hours after our arrival.’

By sunrise all was astir at the camp. The hunters were down at the river having a tub, notwithstanding the existence of muggurs. Shikarees marshalling their mobs of beaters, horses neighing, native servants running about, getting coffee, &c., here and there men with poultry from the village hard by, all helped to form a scene of bustle and activity.

An Indian camp is generally picturesque, especially when pitched like ours, in a position of great natural beauty. Who that has been in camp under similar conditions will ever forget the exhilarating sensation on turning out in the morning? The air fresh, the colour of everything resplendent with the golden rays of the rising sun; the early bath, the chota hazaree, and pipe afterwards; the anticipation of the day’s sport, &c. &c.

But we must pass all this, the subject being pretty threadbare, and leave also the driving business of the day. Let it suffice to say, that our friends went out and were well satisfied with their bag.

The party was now reinforced by five sportsmen (or spears, we should say); who had ridden out during the afternoon, and several others were expected before nightfall, to join in the glorious sport of hog-hunting; and, in order that the reader may understand the affair, a brief description of the country is necessary. Imagine yourself, then, on a very large plain, from which rise abruptly a number of hills, in ranges running for the most part parallel with each other, and at various distances apart.



In height they are about 400 to 500 feet, rather precipitous on the one side and sloping on the other, mostly crested with rocks, dipping almost perpendicularly. These rocks are full of caves, which give cover to tigers, bears, wolves, &c. &c.

The hills are clad with dense jungle, some of the trees being of large growth. The plains or valleys lying between these ranges are fairly level, though often intersected by ugly nullahs (ravines), and bogs; but as a rule, when free from cotton soil, the ground is hard, stony, and only partially cultivated.

The system adopted, under these circumstances, of getting the pigs out of the hills, is as follows:—A long line of beaters is put in at the back of the hill, and stops placed in position across it, to prevent the game from taking along the hills, if too extensive to bring down in one beat. The spears are placed at the foot of the hill facing the plain, where it is hoped the sounder will break; when all is thus formed, the word is passed to the beaters, who drive the pigs over the hill and down between the spears. Great care has to be taken that the riders are not noticed until the pigs have cleared the hill, and have set their heads towards the jungle, on the opposite side of the valley. If they find you out before this they will break back for certain, and nothing will induce them to take to the open again that day. If you succeed in getting them a-foot in front of you, and have an average half-mile or three-quarters, you may reasonably hope to come to terms with them before they can make the opposite jungle, and for this reason hills are selected which offer conditions that will secure a fair gallop from one range to another.

Long before daybreak all was life and movement; fires burning, syces (grooms) busy with their horses, the beaters squatting in groups here and there, pulling away at their 'hubble-bubbles,' whilst the shikarees were in deep consultation with Sloper. All at once a couple of scouts arrived with *klubar* (news). The latter portion of the night being moonlight, they were able to mark a large sounder of hog, busy amongst some cane in one of the valleys about a mile distant. They had left other scouts to see which hills they would take to on the approach of day; and on their arrival in camp half-an-hour afterwards, the welcome information was given that the pigs had gone over to the range on the far side of the plain, and were on the edge of the jungle.

No time was now to be lost; the beaters were sent round the back of the hill to take up their position in line; and the shikarees in charge of the stops accompanied them. A couple

of men were sent down into the plain to show themselves, and induce the sounder to get well into the covert without exciting them; half-an-hour law was given to the beaters, and then the word to boot and saddle was passed, and in a few minutes a dozen sportsmen, mounted on horses of various breeds, but chiefly Gulf Arabs, might be seen passing to and fro, waiting the order to march. Their costumes were for the most part workmanlike, brown and grey being the predominant colours. One might be pretty certain that those brown boots had seen, or would see, as much sport in its truest sense as any of their shiny black cousins at a meet of foxhounds in Leicestershire.

The word to move was soon given, and the men filed off, attended by their syces (or horse-boys), who carried spare spears.

The guide soon brought them within sight of their hunting-ground; and passing silently along, close under the foot of the hill, they took up the respective positions which had been assigned to each overnight, just inside the jungle, and facing the open. As they moved along to get to their places the beaters on the other side of the hill struck up their music, to attract the attention of the pigs, and enable the spears to move in unobserved.

Fred found himself between two men of another regiment, one of whom was, like himself, a novice; and he longed for an occasion to show the other 'griff' how to do it.

Daylight was now commencing to make objects clear to view, and assuring himself that all were properly stationed, Sloper gave the signal for the beaters to commence, and in another minute or so they could be heard making the woods resound with unearthly cries and noises, in which were engaged tom-toms, old kettles, and the like. For some moments nothing but the noise of the beaters could be heard; presently, the flapping of wings announced that some pea-fowl had been disturbed on the roost. Fred, all excitement, could almost hear his heart beat, as the rattle of stones down the hill behind showed that something heavy was afoot. Soon the coolies were on the top of the hill, throwing rocks before them into all corners of refuge, and shouting with redoubled vigour. They had sighted the sounder, and let every one know it.

Old as he was at the work, 'Stingo' began to evince impatience, as the rattling of stones and crackling of branches soon told that the game was afoot. Passing close behind Fred, the sounder broke between Nos. 4 and 5. Fred was No. 3. First came the little pigs, then the sows and bigger pigs. They

trotted quietly out a few yards into the open space, and stopped for a moment ; then appeared a good tusker, and then another, a splendid fellow, as grey as a badger, and at least 38 inches as he stood. Soon they made up their minds to go across, as the beaters in the jungle made more row than ever. Up went the noses of the leaders to wind. All seemed right ahead, so off they trotted. After 'giving them law' (about a hundred yards) there arose a shout which was good to hear, and No. 5, Donolly, a wild Irish Assistant-Surgeon, let a screech out of him that would have raised the shades of the Kings of Ulster, had they been in Asia. No. 4, Craigie of the —th Regiment, was a Scotchman from the border country, and as good a rider as ever sat on the hide of hog. He and Donolly, both old hands, soon let them have it. The younger and lighter pigs began to draw away from the boars, one of which, the big one, took up a line of his own, a little to the left. Fred was riding a few lengths in rear of Craigie, to the right, and found himself going much faster than he expected, when he saw that heavy old chap trot out. Donolly and Craigie were doing all they knew to get the spear. The pace was too good to last long, and told on 'old bristles;' soon he began to sway and roll in his gallop, then to look over his shoulder, grunting significantly as he did so. The riders knew what that meant. Donolly was now ahead, and made a fair rush for the pig, hoping to prick him at all events before he had made up his mind to alter his course. Craigie, seeing this move, gathered his horse together a bit, feeling certain that he would jink.

As Donolly spurted the old tusker turned a little to the right, and pulled himself clean up on his haunches. 'Missed him ! by the holy poker !' cried our Hibernian, as he shot ahead at fifty miles an hour.

Now was Craigie's chance, but the pig was on his bridle hand, and before he could turn his horse into the right direction to get to him, our bristly friend jinked right back and made straight for Fred.

Now Fred's horse was a bit blown, age was telling, and both the other men were well mounted ; the one on an Arab, the other a waler ; and they had certainly given it to piggie rather hot. Hence Fred was some little distance in the rear. Perhaps, as he afterwards confessed, he could not help looking at the ground a bit, and more than once felt tempted to take a pull at his reins. Although one does not meet with stone walls or Irish ditches in riding to pig, still the country is very stony, and broken enough





Fig.  
H  
Foot

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to content the most enthusiastic, and few men will forget their first gallop in Central India. One minute you are sailing pleasantly along, the next you are sliding down the stony side of a deep nullah ; then you find rocks in front of you, and don't feel quite sure whether your horse will accommodate himself to them.

Similar reflections passed through Fred's mind, and perhaps may have told a little on his place. However, he soon appreciated the fact that the pig was coming for his line, and would not be denied. So in order to make sure, as he thought, of hitting him, he brought 'Stingo' up sharp, and received the boar at a stand.

In came old tusks, Fred being too deeply engrossed to hear Craigie's warning shout of 'Keep going!' and although he put his spear down to receive the charge, he speared him too far back, in fact, almost in the loins. Thus the boar ran up the spear, and got right home under poor 'Stingo.' In less time than it takes to recount, both man and horse were down. 'Stingo' dreadfully cut in the stifle and belly, and Fred with three parts of the life shaken out of him. But they were not left undefended; Craigie and others were there and took the pig off, thereby preventing further mischief.

There he stood, this hoary old forester, grimly and at bay, though badly wounded, for the spear had passed clean through him and into the ground, and then broken inside him, his bristles all set, chafing his tusks and blowing hard, defying attack. Presently he made for the jungle, and after one or two charges Craigie fixed him up as he galloped past, and this lusty boar became pork ; but he was revenged, for poor 'Stingo' had to be converted into cat's meat.

Fred was soon on his feet again, and uninjured, but somewhat sorrowful at the loss of his horse. However, he had got a spear, and that was something ; and he thought of it with no little pride, as he made his way up to the now prostrate form of his late adversary, and cut off his tail, which was as it should be, straight and fine, without a twist or turn. He then, for want of a second horse, had to content himself with watching the sport for the remainder of the day from the back of one of the pad elephants.

But our other sportsmen had not been idle. They had secured two other pigs, and in the course of little more than half an hour from the time when the sounder was put out they reassembled as agreed, and moved off to another beat where more pig were found and put out, and although they gave

several good gallops there was no further kill. So ended the day's sport, memorable for one at least—that is, Fred—who will never forget his first pig.

## PARSON'S GORSE.

*By* A. HERON.

### CHAPTER I.

**W**ELL, Martin! and how is the old horse this morning?" I anxiously inquired of my groom.  
'He's a trifle better, I think, sir; he don't favour the leg so much: but it's still very full and hot, and I'm afraid it's going to be a long job before he's fit to go again.'

I had but four horses altogether, and there they were in a row, and every one lamed; it was dreadful luck, but still we had had wonderful sport, though the country had been very heavy from constant rain. I was by no means the only sufferer, but now my last and best horse had come to grief, and as Seton the vet. gave me but little hope of his being 'fit' before the end of the season, there was nothing left but to 'throw him up.' So, with a desponding sigh, I turned my steps back to the hotel, where the rest of our party were preparing to drive on to covert.

It was a good meet, and they were sure of a good day, and the thought of my ill-luck made me feel savage and cross-grained with all the world. As the others passed me on the stairs they again good-naturedly pressed me to take the offer of their second horses, but knowing they were getting short of horses, and that I was no light weight, and feeling my luck was running out, I again declined, and having made up my mind to spend a miserable day, out of sheer 'cussedness' I stuck to it. So, lighting a cigar, I watched them from an upstairs window drive off; and then began to consider how to pass away the time. Suddenly the idea occurred to me to run up to town and try and pick up another horse or two; and as I had heard of some which were reported good, to be sold at Tattersall's, I thought, if they did not fetch too high prices, I might manage to get along until some of my others came round again. So deciding at once, I wrote a note, to be given to my friends on their return, telling them of my intention, and that I hoped to be back in a day or two.

On my arrival in London I drove straight to Tattersall's, where the aforesaid horses were on view; two particularly took my fancy,

but although likely looking, they were evidently got up for sale, and good hunters as I knew them to be, I feared it would take too long to get them into condition. Whilst thus ruminating, a slap on the shoulder made me turn, and I saw the tall, stalwart form of Sir John Dane, one of my late father's oldest and best friends—a true and rare specimen of a real country squire, and a gentleman from head to foot.

‘Well, Dick, my boy! how are you? and what are you up to here—buying or selling?’

‘I was thinking of bidding for those two horses,’ I said pointing to them, ‘for all mine have come to grief, and I literally am *hors de combat*. Ferguson, Maitland, Fred Salisbury and I, are staying at the “Peacock” at Trixworth: we have been having capital sport, but the rain has made the country very heavy, and dreadfully trying, and every one has a stable full of screws.’

‘My dear boy,’ he said, ‘save your money, and come and stay with me; you know you promised to do so when we met at Ascot. I have more horses than I can ride, and can mount you every day the hounds are out, and give you a second horse also. I can also give you lots of shooting on the off-days, and there are one or two balls coming off soon after Christmas. I must return in a day or two, and you had better go down with me. My wife and Ettie are now in town, and they will remain until the end of next week; so come and dine with me to-morrow, and we can make the necessary arrangements.’

It took but little to persuade me to accept both invitations; so, turning my back on my contemplated purchases, I telegraphed to my man to bring up my baggage; then wrote to Ferguson to explain my altered plans, and ask him to keep an occasional eye on my cripples, and let me know from time to time how they were getting on. I then proceeded to pay a long-promised visit to a widowed cousin, who was staying with friends in Kensington.

Kate Pearson had been a widow some years, though still quite young. It was an evil day for her, when, contrary to the advice and persuasion of her best friends, she married Harry Pearson, a ne'er-do-weel of the first water. ‘To give the devil his due,’ he could ride well, and was a keen all-round sportsman, and this was his only recommendation. He had squandered a fortune, and was heavily in debt. It was obvious, therefore, to every one but Kate, that her money was all he wanted, and when this was gone, which occurred about two years after their marriage, he made ‘a bolt’ to Australia, without giving her



the slightest intimation of his intention. He wrote but once to her afterwards, asking for money, which she could not send, and then came a letter from some friend of his out there, giving what professed to be the details of his death.

Happening to mention at dinner next day that I had seen Kate Pearson, and that she was as bright and good-looking as ever, Sir John remarked : ' I have not seen her since her unfortunate marriage years ago, when she somehow dropped out of our circle ; she used to be such a jolly little girl, and a favourite with us all, do try and persuade her to spend Christmas with us. She can come down with my wife and Ettie when they return.' An invitation which required but little persuasion to induce her to accept.

## CHAPTER II.

I KNOW of no more perfectly appointed and comfortable house than Daneton Hall ; time never hangs heavily there, for in the summer there are always cricket and other amusements, and in the winter the best of hunting, fair shooting, and a covered racquet-court, and when the boys were home, more fun still might be safely reckoned upon. It was, therefore, with a feeling of satisfaction I found myself, on the day of our arrival, cosily settled in front of the fire, after as good a dinner as man could desire, listening to Sir John's account of the season's sport, which he suddenly interrupted by jumping up to ring the bell, with the exclamation of, ' By Jove ! I had almost forgotten to give orders for to-morrow ! ' when the servant entered, and informed him that his second horseman, Murphy, had just come from Perkins, the stud-groom, who had met with an accident.

' Send Murphy to me at once,' said Sir John, and shortly after the latter made his appearance.

' What is the matter with Mr. Perkins ? ' Sir John asked, and Murphy replied,—

' The new horse came down with him this morning, Sir John, and lay on his leg ; but though much hurt, the doctor says nothing is broke, and that he will be all right in a few days.'

' I am sorry to hear that,' said Sir John. ' However, Philip had better go on with you to-morrow morning with the roan and the old chestnut mare. And what are the second horses ? '

' Mr. Perkins has sent the book, Sir John, for you to see ; he says that Stilton or Badby ought to go next.'

' Well, then, let them go on, and have saddles on the roan and Badby for Mr. E——.'

When Murphy had taken his departure Sir John turned to

me and said : ' This man Perkins is a new arrival since you were here last. When old Dobson died last year, I, of course, found it necessary to get some one in his place, and Jack Harcourt—who I consulted on the subject—told me he had heard his brother Tom speak of a man he thought would suit. When I went to stay at Sprouston I rode over to see Tom, who has a sort of wild " bachelor den," and leads a free-and-easy life, and to my surprise found Perkins staying with him as his guest. Tom said he had made his acquaintance on board ship, on his voyage from Australia last year ; that Perkins had told him he had lost his money sheep farming. He further said he was a first-rate man on a horse, and evidently knew all about them ; that out of compassion he had asked him to stay until he found employment, as he had absolutely no money, and, moreover, he had a wife to support, who was then staying with friends ; so he begged me to try him. I agreed ; and he came the end of last January. His wife arrived soon after, but although he is evidently a gentleman by birth, his wife is certainly not a lady. When he comes here for orders, I always ask him to have a glass of wine, but as he never refers to his former life I never allude to it. I can't say I quite like him, but he manages capitally, and the horses are better even than in poor old Dobson's time, which is so far satisfactory. He has the old bailiff's cottage in the park to live in, and I think, if you will excuse me for a short time, I will go and see what is the matter.'

' Certainly,' I replied. ' I will go also, if I may.' So, putting on our overcoats, we walked across the park to the cottage.

A servant opened the door, and showed us into the sitting-room, and shortly afterwards Mrs. Perkins came in. She was decidedly a handsome woman, with a hard, bold face. In reply to Sir John, she said that Henery, as she called him, was in bed, but not in much pain, and, when Sir John suggested seeing him, willingly took him upstairs.

Some few days passed with fairly good sport, and then Lady Dane and Ettie, accompanied by Kate Pearson, arrived, and the two boys made their appearance the day following.

Christmas Day came and passed, and a day or two afterwards the hounds met about three miles off, and all our party were out, either riding or driving. It was as Sir John said, one of their best meets, and we were sure to get a run from ' Parson's Gorse,' which they generally drew after a large covert, called Badger Holt, which was seldom good, being wet and with little undergrowth ; we *did*, however, find a fox there, which

gave us a lot of galloping about the rides before he broke, and then ran us a ring of about half an hour at a good pace, but we did not kill. I was riding a black horse called Lucifer, partly from his colour but chiefly from his temper; he was quiet enough when mounted, but a beast if you got near his heels in the stable, or when he was excited, otherwise he was a perfect hunter, and so marvellously easy and clever that it was rarely he blundered, and had never been down since Sir John had owned him. He was a plain animal, big, as all his horses were, but full of blood, and with a very game-looking but sour head. Sir John told me, Lucifer seemed to take the greatest dislike to Perkins, even from the first; so much so, that he fancied he must have ill-used him at some time or other.

I rode him for the first part of the day, and got on capital terms with him, and although queer-tempered, I had never ridden a horse that was so easy and perfect, and Murphy had a second horse out for me if I wanted one. I had not as yet seen Perkins, but Sir John said he was to be out to-day.

They did not persevere after our first fox, but trotted on to Parson's Gorse, which was on the hill-side, and as nicely sheltered as the most Sybaritic fox could desire; if it had a fault, it was that there were too many foxes in it, and though they played the very deuce with the poultry round about, they were invariably good hardy beggars, and ran straight. No sooner were the hounds thrown in than a fox was viewed away at the far end, and we could see him working away at a great pace up the hill. Then came the usual scuttle and rush for the one gate, as the fence at the top was almost impracticable. I was lucky enough to get through with the first dozen, and away we went at score, over a large heathery sort of common, with a stone wall or two across it, and a big double-ditched bank into the road,—across the latter, and over a stile into the plough beyond, and down into the valley again, with the prospect of a lovely country before us, and not a covert to be seen for miles. At the bottom of the hill the going for a field or two was frightfully deep, and even the big horse under me had to work hard to get through, but afterwards it got better, and in a few fields further the hounds were simply racing, when (bad luck to it!) some idiot headed the fox, and he turned half back to the left, over the road we had previously crossed, higher up the hill. For a time the hounds were at fault, having overrun the scent, and we trotted slowly down the road, watching them as they swung round in their cast. On landing in the road the second time I felt my horse give a falter,



Some idiot  
heard  
the fox.







and as we went down the hill I discovered he had cast a fore-shoe, and had broken the hoof considerably. 'Confound it!' I thought; 'my luck again!' And just then, as I was wondering what was best to be done, Sir John came up, having been delayed by the crowd at the gate.

'Have you seen Murphy?' I asked him; 'for Lucifer has cast a shoe and split his hoof.'

'No,' he replied; 'but Perkins is close by, so take his horse;' and as the latter came up Sir John said, 'Perkins, give Mr. E—— your horse; you can take Murphy's, and he had better get a shoe put on at the forge down the lane.'

So giving my horse to Perkins, who I had hardly time to look at beyond noticing that he looked like a gentleman, and taking his, was lucky enough to get with the hounds just as they 'hit off' again, and the scent being good, they soon began to 'go.' We crossed the very cream of the shire, the fences took a lot of jumping, being big enough for the most ardent sportsman. At the end of about twenty minutes there were few of us comparatively 'in it,' Sir John, however, amongst our number: it was a real good thing, but ten to one against killing our fox, for he was still a good bit ahead. We must have gone for nearly an hour with hardly a check, and at such a pace that horses were beginning to tumble about; when to our joy we saw the fox making up the side of a fence, and before he had crossed two more fields the hounds viewed him, and soon after rolled him over in the middle of a big pasture.

We both agreed we had had enough for one day, and turned our horses' heads homewards. After we had gone about a couple of miles we met Murphy, with whom Sir John changed horses, and a mile further on we reached the village of Churton, where we turned into the inn yard to get some chilled water for the horses. Just as we were about remounting, a cattle-dealer drove into the yard, and seeing Sir John, said,—

'I'm afraid I have bad news to give you; there's been a bad accident down at the village—Mr. Perkins is killed!' \* \* \*

It appeared that, not seeing Murphy about, Perkins had taken Lucifer to the forge, and had the shoe put on, and when in the act of mounting, his foot had somehow slipped off the bar of the stirrup (possibly his leg was weak from his recent fall), and he had fallen, when the horse lashed out, and caught him full on the chest.

'It is, indeed, sad news,' said Sir John, as we remounted and made our way to Summers' house (one of his tenant-farmers)

where they had carried him, and where we found the doctor's trap, and were told the latter had brought Mrs. Perkins with him a few minutes before. Leaving a message that we would shortly be back again, we rode on to the Hall, where the news had preceded us, and found Lady Dane, with true sympathy and kindness of heart, preparing to drive over to Summers', and try and induce poor Mrs. Perkins to return with her to the Hall, which she succeeded in doing an hour or so later.

The next day, after luncheon, Sir John asked me to go over with him to the cottage where they had taken poor Perkins, and on our arrival we were shown into the room where he lay. Very reverently Sir John removed the covering from his face.

'Good heavens !' I cried. Startled by my exclamation he turned round inquiringly. I was intently staring at the face of the dead man, and so surprised, that I could not speak. It was Kate's husband, Harry Pearson. There was no mistaking the face, though much altered, doubtless by the hard, dissipated life he had led. What I had failed to recognise in the hurry of changing horses at Parson's Gorse was clear to me now.

Thinking I was shocked at the sight, Sir John made no remark ; but when we had gone some distance from the cottage I told him what had caused my sudden excitement. He had only seen Harry Pearson once, and could hardly remember him, but as he thought it over he became convinced that I was right. We had a long conversation as to what was best to be done under the circumstances, and decided to keep our knowledge a secret, but to take the first opportunity of asking Mrs. Perkins a few questions as to their marriage, &c., in order to satisfy ourselves as to the correctness of our surmises. It was little, however, we were enabled to glean. He had never given her any information of his relatives, and she knew nothing further than that they lived somewhere in London. Her story however, such as it was, confirmed us in our resolutions to keep our knowledge secret. It was indeed strange that the two wives (if *both* could be so called), were actually under the same roof, and in ignorance of the truth, but we felt it was better it should be so for their sakes.

Kate married a year or two after this event, and is happy now, with the best and most devoted of husbands. None other, indeed, than the formerly reckless Tom Harcourt, who, strange to say, met her for the first time, when he came to the Hall, on the occasion of the funeral.



Over the wall  
and a back!

J. H. M.





# FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

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## SPORTING ADVENTURES.

By 'SYKO' (A BULL TERRIER).

**I** EXPLAINED in my first communication of last April who and what I am; it is therefore needless to do so again, as (according to my idea) the world is divided into two classes only—those who read the *Sporting Notes and Sketches* and those who don't. With the latter class I have nothing to do; or, rather, I have thought, for I pity them from the depths of my doggy heart; and the former do not require to be told that I am a dog, a dog with a pedigree and a 'tail,' which I am gradually unfolding, in the twofold hope of affording some amusement to other dogs and of extracting some bones from the cupboard of the Editor of *Fores's Sporting Magazine*.

To get back to the 'tale.' I almost forget what I was barking about, but I think I was jotting down my hunting reminiscences, and had already confessed to having (spare my blushes!) killed a fox. I don't think I ever committed any more sins in the hunting line, though I often went prowling about with a friend of mine called 'Ringwood,' a superannuated foxhound, whose intimate knowledge of 'Charley's' ways and of the country often enabled us to see more of a 'good thing' than many a bruiser in all his pride of a red coat and a three-hundred-guinea hunter. Talking of my old friend reminds me of rather a curious incident, of which he was the hero. There was a crack meet of the — hounds, and he and I had gone out to look on as usual. They found, got him away, and rattled him along over acre after acre of fine old grass land. It was a 'cracker,' and no mistake about it; nothing but a thorough-bred 'un could have lived with them. The first flight were sailing along, crashing through bullfinches, rapping the ox-rails, and

occasionally flying a brook; horses' tails were beginning to 'go' in an ominous way, and even the hardest and boldest were fain to confess that a short breathing-time would be welcome, when there occurred the most extraordinary check I have ever seen. The hounds, who were simply flying over a two-hundred-acre grass field, suddenly threw up; they could make nothing of it, no, not even with the assistance of their world-renowned Huntsman.\* All of a sudden, my old friend 'Ringwood,' who had been muttering and grumbling to himself in the most excited fashion, flew off at a pace for which I should never have given him credit; down went his nose, up went his stern, and really I thought the old gentleman had gone mad, such a row did he kick up. 'Ow, ow, ow-o-o,' and then a final 'O-o-o-W,' which being translated means, 'Here! here! come on, come on! I smell him,' &c. The effect on the pack was magical, they all flew up, and 'scoring' to cry as they came, one and all acknowledged the justice of my friend's remarks. But the best of the joke I learned afterwards. It seems that when the 'Master' heard Ringwood's voice, and saw him in the distance, he was so pleased that he mistook him for his favourite Solomon, and came galloping up with a 'Hark to Solomon! Hark! By George, what a hound that is! the best in the world. Hark to Solomon!' They say that when he found it was a strange hound, and not his beloved Solomon, he said something beginning with a very big D. At all events I know, that when any of his friends want to get what you men call a 'rise' out of the 'Master,' they begin gently murmuring, 'Hark to Solomon! Hark!'

Another time I was 'out' I saw a fox killed in a curious place. There is a well-known pack of hounds which always meets on Ash Wednesday, and, curiously enough, invariably has a good run that day; in fact, so proverbially good is the Ash-Wednesday sport, that sportsmen come from all the neighbouring packs to get their share of it. I wonder whether any of you can guess the 'hounds' I allude to?

Well, this was an Ash Wednesday—I don't care to recollect how many years ago, at all events it was one of the best of the numerous good days they had had that season: a real tough old

\* The above fact actually occurred with a well-known pack of hounds, and the suddenness and completeness of the check has often been a topic of conversation with hunting-men; a wandering beagle finally put them right in the way I have attributed to 'Ringwood.'

dog-fox led them a regular dance over some of the wildest and roughest country in Northamptonshire, and finally, in a last attempt to save his brush, went full tilt into the little church of L—g—n, where the assembled congregation were reverently listening to the awful thunders of the Commination Service. Three couple of great dog-hounds were close behind him, and before anything could be done they ran into him, in the centre aisle of the church, and almost at the parson's feet.

Then there was another funny thing I remember seeing one day in the same part of the world. H. R. H. the Prince of Wales was on a visit to the Duke of —, and, of course, like the true Englishman and Prince of Sportsmen as well as of Wales that he is, went out hunting whenever he could, and with his well-known kindness of heart had a pleasant word to say to each and all who were either presented to him or came in his way in the varied incidents of the chase.

Well, among the former was a regular type of the old yeoman-farmer, a well-known character in the neighbourhood, and who was generally on something that could not only carry a bit of weight, but gallop and jump into the bargain; and of course, on this occasion he, like the rest of us, was on the 'clipper that stands in the stall at the top.'

He was presented to the Prince, and after a few moments' conversation on the crops, &c., H. R. H. remarked that his horse looked like a good one.

'I should think he were a good 'un,' rejoined the worthy old farmer, who was no great stickler for etiquette; 'he'll jump hanything you like to put his 'ead at;' and so saying he looked round to see if there was anything handy to show off his jumping powers. The only thing that caught his eye was—*a cow*, peacefully reposing at a little distance.

'There! bless my heart! do believe he'll jump that cow!' said the old worthy, and cantering gaily off, rode manfully at the animal in question. The horse did not belie his owner's praise; he rose at the cow, as if he was accustomed to jump cows instead of fences all day long: but, alas! alas! at the critical moment the cow got up, and over went farmer and horse and all, a most beautiful 'crownner,' amid roars of laughter from the assembled 'field,' in which none joined more heartily than H. R. H. himself. Cows were a sore subject with the worthy yeoman for some time afterwards, and he got chaff enough on market-days to catch the wittiest and oldest of birds.



But there! I am and always have been mad about hunting; the sight of a red coat sets me barking at any time; while as for the 'note' of a hound, it makes me 'all over like.' I want to run, to jump, to bite; oh! how I do long to get my teeth into something when I hear that full, wild melody! I suppose it is the same feeling with you men, that makes you catch hold of your horses' heads, and ram them smack at the nearest fence, no matter how black and forbidding, directly Charley is away with the pack at his brush. I have heard it said that one may have too much of a good thing, but I don't think so; I know I never had too much of a good bone, for what I couldn't eat I would bury in the garden till I wanted it. And I am perfectly sure that one can't have too much hunting; in fact, one never has enough of it, particularly in these bad times; and there's many a keen sportsman and fine horseman standing down now for want of the money that 'makes the mare to go.' Pity them, ye lucky sportsmen! and when the wine goes round after a real clipping run, drink (and no heeltaps, mind) a real good bumper to 'Fox-hunting, and better luck to the poor devils whose hearts are with it, though themselves are not.'

My poor master has lately been obliged to join the 'unlucky band,' and I shall never forget his wretchedness as he watched the last hunter file out of the stable-gate; he shut himself up in his 'den,' and some time afterwards I found the following effusion lying on his table: it was called, 'My Crock and I.'

'We've followed the Hounds and the Horn  
On many a fine hunting morn,  
And never, though fences were tall,  
Was one that could give us a fall.

We loved to watch each sturdy hound  
Sniffing the track along the ground,  
While full and clear their music grand  
Pealed mellow o'er the tainted land.

And oft we've swept o'er hill and dale,  
And laugh'd to scorn the post and rail;  
No gliding brook was e'er so wide  
We could not take it in our stride.

There's a thrill in the bursting crash,  
When the hounds from the cover dash;

Hearts beat high when they racing fly  
"Mute" on a burning scent breast-high.

Ne'er again shall I hear thee neigh,  
Or softly whinny, all in play:  
Oh! may thy future master be  
Full well as proud and fond of thee.'

And here there was a great wet blob upon the paper. If any of you have got that 'old crock' in your stables look after him, for he is a good one.

I forget if I mentioned that my master used to 'do a bit of racing;' at all events he did. He was not one of your big owners, for his purse wouldn't allow that, but he generally had about half a dozen in training, and his 'lot,' as a rule, consisted of a couple of two-year-olds, with plenty of bone and staying blood in them, bought with a view to their eventually becoming jumpers; a couple of hurdle-racers, and a couple of 'chasers:' the performers over the 'sticks' and the 'chasers' he used to ride himself, and he was no duffer I can tell you. There was a time, before he married, when he bid fair to become one of the shining lights among the 'gentlemen;' and many a time I have seen him pull off a race on some nasty, cantankerous brute, that, to put it mildly, was not everyone's horse. So long as the beast was a horse, and had legs enough to stand upon, it was all the same to him what it was, or whose it was; and I've often heard him say that he'd go from one end of the world to the other to get a 'mount' at the end of his journey: so you can imagine he was pretty fond of the game.

I had never seen a racehorse, and knew absolutely nothing about the grandest animal in the world, till I accompanied my master into —shire, where his horses were trained, to see a young one tried.

I shall never forget that lovely morning as long as I live. We were out early, I think about half-past five. An April sun was just warming up the world, there was a faint haze rising from the ground, and the song of the birds, or the occasional contented lowing of a cow, were all the sounds that broke upon the peaceful scene: while, far as the eye could reach, stretched the smooth expanse of short, green, elastic sward, on which so many horses had taken their daily exercise. Such scenes have a curious effect upon me: they make me think of an impossible existence, in which we dogs should never be kicked or thrashed,

in which bones plentifully covered with meat should abound, when we should never grow old, and stiff, and weary, our teeth never become blunt and useless, and our lives be spent in the peaceful and contented slaughter of numerous and gigantic badgers, cats, and rats; but, alas! reflection convinces me that that happy state will never be reached, for even I, with the best and kindest of masters, have often had bitter cause to rue having killed a cat. And I do like killing a cat, they are so soft and 'squirmy,' and they squall so delightfully, and they just scratch enough to lend piquancy to the operation. But here, I am wandering away from my subject again. We were out on the 'Heath,' then, at half-past five in the morning, to see the sight, novel to me, of a young thoroughbred being 'put through the mill.' My master and Telford, the trainer, were both on horseback, and I was trotting contentedly at their heels, devoured with curiosity to know what was going to happen; but all I could pick up from their conversation were such fragments as, 'seven pounds,' 'a year,' 'two lengths,' 'put him in at Croydon,' &c.

'Now then, Sir,' I heard Telford say to my master, 'if you'll stand here, just opposite that little bit of stick, you'll see how they finish: there are six of them in with him; the old horse will jump off and bring them along, and if our young customer is anywhere handy, within a couple of lengths, we shall know something at all events.' So saying, he cantered off to start them, and left us to see the finish.

For some time I neither saw nor heard anything, but suddenly I heard a regular dull thud, thud, coming nearer and nearer, like the pulsing throb of some mighty engine; nearer and nearer it came, and at last I saw that most splendid of all sights, a string of thoroughbreds, in perfect condition and fully extended. Doesn't it make your heart beat quicker as you see that flying vision flash past you, as you see those powerful arms reach out, and those clean, strong hocks, alternately tucked almost under the girths, and then shot out behind with the force of a catapult, and all this with apparently no effort, and with the regularity and precision of machinery? It does mine, although I'm getting an old stager at it now. However, I kept my eyes fixed as well as I could on the stick I saw my master was watching; and as they flashed past it I noticed a chestnut colt lying second, and right up at the leading horse's girths. I saw my master's eyes brighten for a moment, and as he turned to canter off to meet the trainer I heard him say, 'Well, if he isn't a good'un he

ought to be.' And so he was. Great hopes were built upon him, but it was not to be: for roaring, that curse of our thoroughbred stock, took him in its horrid grasp, and rendered him practically useless for racing purposes. But I afterwards learnt that on the turf these disappointments are common enough, and I have often felt inclined to bite some of those ignorant noodles one so constantly hears inveighing against an owner because his horse does not happen to run exactly in accordance with their views, or to finish exactly where their tout-illuminated intelligence leads them to expect. They never seem to reflect a minute on the expenses and anxiety of owners and trainers, or the thousands of accidents that occur in the strain of a severe training, or on the fact that an owner may purchase dozens of well-bred yearlings at a vast expense, not one of which, perhaps, will turn out good enough to win a selling plate; and even if you happen to own a good one, and he is delivered fit and well at the post, all is not over then—a bad start, being shut in and unable to 'come through' till too late, and other things besides, suffice to make the biggest 'moral certainty' of the year an uncommonly doubtful one.

I know myself a three-year-old horse belonging to my master was once 'asked a question' for the Cambridgeshire: they tried him to *give seven* pounds to a horse that had run third in the Derby that year. Well, he simply smothered him at the weights; in fact, ran smack into the town before he could be stopped. Yet he was nowhere in the race, and the jockey who rode remarked, 'He went like a dead horse from the start;' and a dead 'un he was, and what's more, he never got over it. If you want another Cambridgeshire story, ask anybody who knows what they thought of 'Sunburn's' race, and whether the 'stable' thought it a good thing or not?

Racehorses are curious animals to deal with. Some of them have as many fancies as a young lady, and, like her, must be indulged in them; others are like a pig going to market, and will go every way except the right one; and I remember hearing about 'a chaser,' who was a most peculiar brute. I believe his name was 'Acrobat,'—I won't be quite sure, though. He was a very smart horse over a country, or, rather, would have been, if he liked; but there was only one man ever got anything out of him—in fact, I think he only won one race. The man who rode him in it is now a trainer at Newmarket, and I heard him tell my master how he managed him. It appears the brute had a



trick of invariably either refusing or bolting at the second water-jump; no coaxing, no force, nothing could ever get him to do the whole course: he was sure to turn it up somewhere, and a goodish bit of money had been dropped on him at different times.

'Yes, Sir,' said Telford, in answer to my master, 'Acrobat was a rum customer; no one ever got much good of him but me.'

'How did you tackle him, Telford?'

'Well, I was riding in those days, and I wasn't as "beefy" as I am now, as you can guess,' he said, looking down with a smile on his portly and well-fed person. 'However,' he continued, 'I had ridden in the first race, and they were saddling for the big steeplechase of the meeting. I hadn't got a mount, and was going to look on, when "the Captain" came up to me, and asked if I'd like a ride on Acrobat. Now I knew all about the brute, and guessed that the chap who usually rode wouldn't have any more to do with him. I didn't much care about the "mount," but, you know, I hadn't got a wife and family to look after in those days, so I said "Yes." Well, I went and weighed, and we went down to the post, and I got a good deal of chaff from the other jockeys about my "mount." This put my "monkey" up, and I thought I should be uncommon glad to make them laugh the other side of their mouths; but how to do it I couldn't think. Well, off we went, and he took his fences beautifully, strong and easy as possible, till I began to think he really did mean business. Down we came to the water, second time, and I could feel the brute beginning to shorten his stride and look about to see where he should bolt to. I daren't touch him, and little "Jimmy," who was close alongside of me, began to grin. "Hullo! Bill," he says, "what's up?" I didn't know what on earth to do; all of a sudden I got an idea; I went backwards and forwards a little in the saddle, you know, sir, as if you were pulling him up; of course I didn't put any pull on him really. "Woa! old man! Woa! old man!" said I, trying to speak as if I was frightened. Well, I kept on gammoning him, and dash me, just as we was nearing the brook if he didn't think he was really running away with me; he jumped into his bridle like a flash of lightning, over he went like a bird, and they never saw me again for the rest of the journey. The Captain was uncommon surprised and pleased into the bargain; he often wanted me to ride him again, but I never would. I wanted some of the other chaps to try what they could do with

him, and so they did, but he never won another race for any of them.'

I could tell you some more things I've heard about racing and racehorses, but I won't now, because I hear the cook rattling the saucepans about in the kitchen, which means that it's my dinner-time ; and besides, I'm rather tired, for I went out for a walk by myself this afternoon, and killed two cats. I know there'll be a row about it, and I want to get out of the way before my master comes home.

## A DAY'S 'OTTERING' ON EXMOOR.

By J. R. ROBERTS ('HELWR').

**M**Y friend Dick Bowchurch and I had been fishing in the Barle, one afternoon in the end of July ; and the weather being hot, and our creels nearly full (for the river was just fining after a welcome, long-wished for 'spate'), we were sitting on a rock in mid-stream, smoking a peaceful pipe. Needless to say, we wore 'waders,' and so could comfortably adopt an amphibious position very pleasant under the circumstances. Conversation travelled *via* our recent good sport to the state of the river as regards fish ; this led by a natural consequence to herons, and their destructive ways : from this it was not a long jump to the subject of otters. Bowchurch said, 'Mr. C—— is of opinion that otters are the best friends of trout and trout-fishers.'

'Dear me !' said I, 'what a novel doctrine ! How does he make that out ?'

'Oh, he says that they feed principally—that is, they prefer to feed—upon eels, which are the greatest enemies of trout spawn.'

I was considerably surprised ; but, of course, could not argue the point, as Mr. C——, M. O. H., is universally regarded in the West Country as being very knowing about the habits of otters and trout ; and also as being wonderfully skilful in the slaying of both. This brought to my mind the fact that I had a letter in my pocket from the gentleman in question, which I had not yet opened, owing to the pleasurable excitement under which I had been labouring all day. I took it out, and read aloud as follows :—'Mr. C——'s otter-hounds meet (weather permitting) on Thursday, July 31st, at Marsh Bridge, at 7 o'clock.'

Whether the otter be a dear friend, or a valued enemy (for if an enemy, yet valued—as is Monsieur Reynard—for his sport-giving qualities) we decided to throw in our lot with the otter-hounds on the day in question, which was on the morrow, and see if haply we might assist at the funeral ceremony of one or more of the before-mentioned dear friends—or valued enemies. A ten-mile walk separated us from Marsh Bridge ; consequently, breakfast at four o'clock was the order. It was not quite light when we came downstairs, but the sun had fairly started on his twenty-four hours' match against Time when we set forth. White mists hung in the valleys ; there was a fresh, cool, exhilarating feeling in the air that made one wonder why getting up at such an hour was not the rule instead of the exception. Half-an-hour's climb brought us to the top of a high moor ; and then, what a prospect surrounded us ! Brave old Dunkery, though ten miles off, looked so near that he appeared to be within rifle-shot ; and away to the south'ard the distant peaks of Dartmoor stood up so close, and so sharply defined, that the fifty miles that intervened scarce seemed a dozen. As viewed from our lofty situation, the long line of Dartmoor materially helped to produce a wonderful effect. The country between was buried in a white, level mist, looking in very truth like the sea, or, better still, like the estuary of some great river ; and here and there just the tip of some high ground would appear, for all the world like an island. In the west the mist was a little ruffled on its surface, and counterfeited most naturally the breakers over a bar, when the tide comes rushing in : to us the bar at Appledore suggested itself, because we knew it well. Never did I see the estuary of a large river so clear, so beautiful, or from a position that gave a view of so much of it at once. Truly the prospect before us was more real to the eye than the reality itself : it was as if a picture of a very familiar scene lay at our feet, the scale of which was larger than nature, everything appeared magnified—appeared closer and more distinct than we had ever seen that which we were reminded of so vividly.

There had been rains recently, after a long drought, and the bracken was in its freshest green ; the heather was getting purple in places, and the berries on the mountain-ash were beginning to assume their brilliant autumn tint. Occasionally a rabbit would scamper away, scared at our approach, the white tuft which is seen when these little creatures favour us with a rear view oscillating in a comical manner ; now and again a bevy of 'poults' rose from the patches of heath, and the whortleberry

bushes hidden beneath them; a snipe that had kindly remained during the summer to remind us of the delights his company, and that of his fellows, would afford us in the winter, uttered his shrill, startling cry, and dodged, twisted, and finally sank down among some rushes, with a toss of his wings—all performed in the usual baffling and eccentric manner; and once, a noble stag (who had most probably made a midnight raid upon some neighbouring orchard) favoured us with a private view, as he moved off at a canter preliminary to the more serious gallop he would have to take ere long for the edification and relaxation of the noble Master of the 'Devon and Somerset,' his hounds, and his field.

For the lover of the picturesque there were strangely beautiful effects of moor and mountain, light, shade, and ever-varying colour; for the student of natural history, much interesting matter; for the artist, 'bits' innumerable; and for the sportsman, such a variety of objects suggestive of coming sport;—so many thoughts and remarks called forth by the incidents of this early morning walk that I wonder we (who were sportsmen) ever reached our destination. But, in spite of all these distractions, we at last got down from our lofty situation, and struck the river at a point about a mile above the place fixed for the meet, at five minutes past seven. Whilst refreshing mind and body with the first pipe of the day—how particularly sweet is this pipe!—we heard the sharp, clear blast of the horn, which was immediately echoed from the rocks and valley; then a mellow voice crying 'Yooi-ee! little bitch! That's it! Gallant, good hound!' proclaimed the welcome fact that the sport was begun.

There were nine and a half couple of hounds and three terriers. The latter were very excited, self-important, and busy. The former were of all sizes, being staghounds, foxhounds, and harriers; but in spite of their variety as regards size, shape, and breed, they are acknowledged to be thoroughly staunch, useful, and business-like. The amount of work they did on this occasion, and the thorough way in which they all did it, speak volumes for their excellence. A gentleman was heard to say sarcastically, when we first joined them, 'The best of these hounds is, they never tell lies.' What was meant as a serious imputation upon their character was, in fact, a well-deserved compliment. Our field numbered about forty on foot and a dozen mounted; among the latter the fair sex being represented. Of the forty foot-passengers about a score intended assisting the Master by taking the water when occasion should require.



Hounds soon hit a trail, though not a very hot one, and went up stream at a good pace, discoursing much music. We had to run in order to keep up; and the whole party scrambled over the rocks, dashed through the bushes, and trod on each other's heels, in a great state of heat and excitement. The Master, in spite of his sixty-five years, sped along as light as a feather, as easily as the great GEORGE; stopping, however, occasionally to examine the margin of the river for *spears* or *suage*.

The pace was soon allowed to slacken when our four-footed allies dropped from a chorus to a duet; from a duet to a solo; from a solo to a dead silence. The master kept on addressing encouraging remarks to individual members of his company: 'Hey, Rector! — Yooi-ee, Doverly! — That's it, Harlequin!' whilst he encouragingly informed Rally and Lavish that they were good *bitches*. Notwithstanding all this, they spoke not; and 'so the chase rode on' (some walking).

I remember to have heard a motto, 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will recline under the shadow of his own fig-tree.' Thus the child reaps, in his old age, the benefits of the judicious guidance of those who taught him proper habits in his youth. There are, however, sometimes drawbacks to the early inculcation of particular habits. It is so difficult to eradicate them afterwards, if required. The stag-hounds of our pack exemplified this: they *would* leave the water at odd times, and dash up the steep, woody hill-sides, in search of the 'antlered monarch.' Once or twice they hit a line, and a fine rating, whip-cracking, and horn-blowing ensued. The terriers, also, mindful of early days, kept a sharp look-out for rabbits—which were very plentiful; and when they started one, what else could one expect but that the hounds of harrier or beagle strain should so behave as to call forth curses and cries of 'Ware rabbit!' from their master, together with horn-blowing, rating, and whip-cracking, as aforesaid?

It was now very hot; a blazing sun looked down upon us in a melting manner from a cloudless sky. There was no wind, but there were flies; oh, yes, there were flies. For two hours we traversed rough, stony paths, climbed over boulders, stooped under branches of trees, waded through bogs, swamps, and all manner of slime, with no time to admire the magnificence of the scenery. High hills, clothed to the top with oak, beech, birch, and fir, walled in the river on both sides; the bending of the river disclosed charming vistas; but we heeded them not.

At last TARR STEPS was reached. Reader, do you know TARR STEPS—commonly called Tarr Burge (*i. e.*, Bridge)?

The wide and rapid Barle is here spanned by great slabs, supported upon props of stone. The passage is smooth, level, continuous, four feet wide, and about a foot above the water, when the latter is at its ordinary level; though it may be that much below. The slabs have no side or fencing. It is a nice crossing for one on foot, but not a very desirable place to ride a horse over; though that has often been done, when the water proved too high and rapid for the usual passage through it, alongside the bridge.

This bridge—it can only be called one by courtesy—is a relic of the skill, ingenuity, and patience of those who inhabited the district in bygone days. I cannot say if it was built a thousand years ago, or five thousand; nor if we are indebted for it to Celts, Romans, Belgæ, or Ancient Britons: those who want information on these points must go to 'another shop.'

Soon after passing Tarr Steps, Comus spoke in a rich, bell-like voice, that was to be expected from such a poetical hound; and after Royal, the leading hound, had sniffed the *ream* upon the water, she added her reliable testimony. Then the whole eleven couple gave tongue,—I have included the terriers; for while the hounds bayed in the water, they yelled on the bank—and once more the frantic rush took place.

The otter could not have been far ahead, for he was soon viewed; and a cry of 'Hoo-gaze!' from three sources at once put every one in good spirits. Ten or a dozen (including the writer) dashed into the river below the hounds, and quickly formed a 'guard.' The Master might be seen standing in the water up to his waist, in the midst of his hounds. He is a man who may be said to be amphibious; for he has hunted a pack of otter-hounds for more than forty years, and during that time has probably spent fifteen or sixteen hours a-week during the season, more or less, wet up to his head. I have known him walk in a river for hours, and travel miles; as for standing about in the water, he seems more comfortable there (and certainly happier) than on land. I do not think he would know the meaning of the words cold, rheumatism, or lumbago, without the aid of a dictionary.

The gentlemen of the guard were engaged, to all appearance, in looking at their boots through the medium of three feet of puddly water, obedient to the Master's warning cries of 'Eyes down,' 'Coming down stream,' 'Keep him up.' One of the party

(I decline to particularise) suddenly had a vision of a piece of slippery leather being washed between his legs at lightning speed—and the line was broken !

A breathless, splashing race down stream, during which, if you did not get wet through by falling into a hole as deep as yourself, you were dragged to the top of your hat by the splashing of your colleagues (hounds and men) alongside ; and in the time it has taken to write it the 'guard' was formed again. The hounds, assisted by the watchful Master, soon discovered his whereabouts, and cries of 'Hoo-gaze ! tally-ho !' from the bank, made us all alert.

Again the 'guard' was broken ; but no blame was to be attached to any member thereof, as the hounds had so puddled the water above our 'stickle' that I doubt if a whale coming down would have been seen, provided he kept below the surface and fouled no one in his passage. The process already described was repeated ; and the next 'guard' was formed. It proved a tedious affair ; for the master and hounds went up stream, turned a bend, and remained out of sight for an hour. Our occupation without their presence was monotonous, and lacked excitement. I say nothing of a certain chilly, crampy feeling about the legs. Occasionally we heard that they were attending to business up above, through the medium of the voices of Royal, Lavish, Comus, Doverly, and Co., and that of the Master addressing them in terms affectionate and encouraging.

Now the one drawback to 'ottering'—and there are drawbacks that give zest to all sports—is that you must not smoke. Our worthy old Master dislikes smoking *per se* ; but he strictly forbids it in the vicinity of hounds at work, because it pervades the bushes which overhang the stream, perfumes the surface of the water, and destroys the less delicate but more important *ream*. Whilst on guard, with the Master some distance ahead, I lighted a pipe, and several others followed suit. Just as we were in full blast a red coat was seen gleaming under the bushes on our right. It became more visible, and was soon observed to have a ruddy face above it. Pipes were instantaneously pocketed, all alight ; but the keen nose of the Master discovered our crime ; and as no individual sinner could be singled out, he addressed the whole guard : 'May I ask you, gentlemen, to be so kind as to postpone your smoking for a little while, or to leave the water ; the smell of tobacco hangs about the bushes, and baffles hounds. Surely you prefer "ottering" to that stinking habit ?'





Holding the varmint at arms length,  
he carried it ashore.





The forming of a 'guard,' the breaking thereof by the wily one, the reforming—all this went on for several hours. Each time our quarry vented he appeared more fatigued, and to appreciate the sport less.

Instead of swimming under water, his course being indicated by a line of bubbles, he now swam on the top, only diving when a hound made a snap at him. At last a couple of hounds seized him at once, in the middle of a deep pool, and essayed to pull him in two.

He made his escape, little the worse for the encounter; for an otter's skin is so hard, tough, and slippery, that such a tussle as this might be repeated almost *ad infinitum* without killing him.

Whilst this was going on the pack surrounded him, and on emerging from his dive he scrambled up the bank, and started for a trip 'across country.' 'Tally-ho! hoo-gaze!' Away go hounds, men, and terriers, in a confused heap. Before Mr. Otter has half crossed the ham he has again to submit to a couple of hounds trying to divide him fore and aft, whilst the terriers hang upon him by their teeth, in graceful attitudes. He thinks it better to return to the water.

The Master now decided that it was time to commence the last scene; so when the otter next appeared in shallowish water, a young member of the 'guard' dashed at him, and adroitly 'tailed' him. This operation requires considerable skill, nerve, and practice; but Mr. 'Teddie' had done it before. Holding the varmint at arm's length, he carried it ashore, the hounds baying, splashing, and snarling around him. At last he flung it into the midst of the pack. Five or six hounds got a good grip of various parts of his body at once, and very soon he was dead, and so mangled that his female parent would not have recognised him. 'Worry, worry! toot-toot! yoo-ie, yoo-ie! who-whoop!' &c. Several couple of hounds had possessed themselves of a long, narrow strip of leathery, bloody substance, and were enacting the old play of 'pull devil, pull tailor;' and for a brief period the hounds seemed to be under the influence of very angry passions. A few fights were started, which bade fair to become serious; but whipping and rating nipped them in the bud. All this, of course, after the Master had possessed himself of pads and pole.

Very soon the horn summoned the revellers from the remaining crumbs of the banquet, and away they went up stream to seek

a fresh trail. Another otter might have been killed afterwards ; two might have perished. As they are so useful for preserving trout, I hope they did not slay them all ; and, indeed, they must be useful if they destroy the eels, if it be true that one eel will eat three tons of trout (or that which would become three tons) in a year.

I am not in a position to say what sport befell the good hounds, and the good men who accompanied them, during the remainder of the day, for, after the death of Otter No. 1, Dick Bowchurch and I absconded.

## 'IN THE LION'S DEN.'

By FINCH MASON.

**W**ELL! I'm *glad* I'm back again!' So spake in my hearing, not long ago, a favourite London actress, after the loud and prolonged applause had subsided which greeted her as she tripped gaily on to the stage for the first time after a lengthened absence in America.

'Well! I'm *glad* I'm back again!' Madam, I bow to you ; and allow me at the same time to echo your sentiments most heartily. Yes ; sitting here in my old London lodgings over a cosy cup of tea and buttered toast—the latter such as only my landlady can make—I can't help rising occasionally and shaking hands with myself, saying at the same time, 'Softly, my dear fellow! I'm uncommonly glad to see you again well and hearty.'

'Well and hearty,' did I say? The only wonder is that I am alive at all after all that I have gone through of late.

It is just three months ago since I, Samuel Softly—the Reverend Samuel Softly, B.A., so please you, newly ordained—having nothing to do and plenty of time to do it in, came up to town and planted myself in comfortable rooms on the second floor of No. — in that thoroughfare well beloved of the cloth, to wit, Margaret Street, Cavendish Square.

Having settled myself down, my next move was to comb out the most seductive advertisement I could think of for the columns of the *Guardian* ; and that feat accomplished I sat down, and, like Mr. Micawber, waited for 'something to turn up.' Nothing *did* turn up for ever so long—so long, indeed, that I began to get rather tired of waiting. I had done all the

pictures, from those in the National Gallery to Nana at the Egyptian Hall, and most of the theatres; in short, seen all the sights of town in a quiet sort of way; and now, being neither of a *dolce-far-niente* disposition nor too well endowed with worldly goods, positively hungered for something to do. So that when, one fine morning, I received a letter from an old friend of mine, asking me would I care to become leader to a young bear he was acquainted with, I eagerly snapped at the offer. The youth in question was, my friend told me, the only child of Mr. Golightly, of Cockalorum Court, a rich foxhunting country gentleman of the 'Squire Western' school, who, having a supreme contempt for education in any shape or form, did not propose sending young Hopeful to school or college at all: in which resolve he was well backed up by that weak-minded lady his wife. He was now in want of—not a tutor, but simply some one to live in the house, to go about with the young squire, and keep him as well as he could out of mischief. This sudden resolve on the old gentleman's part being decided upon, as I heard afterwards, on his discovery one fine day of a desperate flirtation between his son and heir and Jenny Owlet, the keeper's daughter.

'You'll have an easy berth of it,' wrote my friend, 'for I am told the Golightly establishment is a sort of Liberty Hall; and if you are anything of a sportsman—I forget if you are or not—you are sure to be well received. If the old Squire, too, takes a fancy to you, it may eventually lead to a living—he is the patron of one or two: so if I were you, my boy, I should accept it. Young Golightly has hitherto been allowed to run wild, I believe, but I've no doubt you'll mould him into shape after a bit; and, most important point of all,' wound up my correspondent, 'the pay is A 1.'

This was quite sufficient for me. I had evidently got hold of a good thing, so I wrote off at once to Squire Golightly accepting the post of bear-leader to his hopeful son, and at the same time sent in a note to my old Cambridge friend Snuffle—'the Reverend Snuffle,' as my landlady called him—who lived next door to me, inviting him to a little banquet at Romano's that very evening by way of 'celebrating the event.'

Two days after saw me *en route* for Cockalorum Court, or, as I shall always designate it in future, 'The Lion's Den.'

\* \* \* \* \*

'Raddleton Ro—ad! Raddleton Ro—ad! Raddleton ——'

'Here, porter, open the door!' said I, slamming hastily down



the window of my carriage, letting in at the same time a fierce draught of keen frosty air, much to the disgust of an elderly gentleman fast asleep in the corner, and interrupting the leather-lunged porter in the middle of his sentence.

'R-o-o-a-d!' shouted he in disgust, as if determined not to be done, as he opened the door. 'Be you for Raddleton Road, Zur?' inquired he, somewhat surlily.

'Yes; let me out, please. I have a portmanteau, bag, and a hatbox in the van, and this bag and rug and small parcel. And, porter, do you know if there is a conveyance of any sort from Cockalorum Court to meet me?'

The porter brightened up at once. 'Oh, be you the gent as is coomin' to look arter Mas'r Garge, Zur?' said he, dropping my things on the platform with a flop and shaking his head. 'Be you Mister Softy?'

'My name is Softly, and I am about to superintend the future education of young Mr. Golightly,' I answered, with an air of some pride, though at the same time I had half a mind to ask this proud young porter what business it could possibly be of his.

'Then that be all right, that be,' said he, with a relieved sort of air. 'Mas'r Garge be here to meet you hisself, Zur. He told me to tell you he'd put the dog-cart up at the Station Hotel, and you'd find him in the 'freshment-room. Down them stairs, Zur, and along the passidge, 'arf way to the hup line; you can't miss it. I'll see to your luggidge, Zur, all right, never you fear,' said he, as I endowed him with sixpence. And as he moved off with his truck towards the guard's van at the end of the train he pointed once more to the stairs down which I was to go, adding, 'You'll be sure to foind Mas'r Garge where I told 'ee, Zur;' and I overheard him mutter to himself with a knowing chuckle, 'Mas'r Garge be the best terrier the Squoire's got, to go to ground—he be.'

\* \* \* \* \*

'A'done, *do*, Mister Golightly! You shan't then, *there*! See what you've done! That's the second wine-glass as you've broke, and now you've gone and disarranged all my back 'air! Go along with you, *do*, and get the proper side o' the counter d'reckly. I expect the governor here every minnit, and then whatever shall I do if he ketches of you here?'

Such were the words, which, accompanied by a scuffling noise, as if some fiend in shape of man was endeavouring by force of arms to snatch a kiss from one of the softer sex, I over-

heard as I opened the door of the refreshment-room, where I at last found myself, after having lost my way at least half-a-dozen times. A good-looking youth, of about sixteen or so, in a knickerbocker suit, vaulted lightly over the counter as I entered, and proceeded immediately, in some confusion, to immerse his countenance in a tankard of bitter beer, whilst the young person behind the bar, whose remonstrances I had overheard, came forward with flushed face and ruffled hair to know my pleasure.

'May I ask,' said I politely, 'have you seen a young gentleman named Golightly——'

'Hallo!' suddenly exclaimed the young gentleman in the knickerbockers, 'you're not Mister Softly, are you?'

I replied in the affirmative.

'I'm George Golightly; how d'ye do! To tell you the truth, I didn't think you'd come until the 5.30; so I was "passing the time away," as the comic song says—do you know it?—in the agreeable and fascinating company of Miss Polly here. Let me introduce you—Miss Polly, Mister Softly; Mister Softly, Miss Polly. Miss Polly was giving yours truly a kiss when you came in; would do it, though I tried to stop her. Don't deny it, Miss P.; you're always a-doin' of it, you know you are. Never mind, I forgive you. We'll have the banns put up next Sunday, and Softly here shall marry us the week arter, and then you can kiss me as much as you like—can't she, Softly? And now I beg your pardon for not asking you before. What's your pison? Gin and bitters, sherry and bitters, or—I can particularly recommend the whisky? You won't! Oh, but you must! Two sherrys and bitterses, Miss P., and then we'll be off, for here's your governor, as you call him, a-comin', and I can't abide him.'

This, then, was my first introduction to my new pupil; and I may as well add that by the time we arrived at Cockalorum Court, which feat we accomplished, after many hair-breadth escapes on the way, in a very high dog-cart drawn by a vicious-looking bay mare with a rat tail, I had heard more about horses and dogs—or 'dawgs,' as my pupil called them—than I ever had in my whole life before; and also that, long before my journey's end, I had thus soon come to the conclusion that I had in my new charge got a handful such as I did not quite bargain for.

\* \* \* \* \*

When I awoke the next morning, which I did with a most fearful headache and a tongue like the back of a Latin grammar, I could not for the moment collect my scattered faculties so far

as to recollect where I was. At last my eye rested on an old hunting print over the mantlepice, and then the events of the previous evening all came back to me. I remembered drinking 'Foxhunting' very early in the evening; I remembered the butler coming in with a second supply of claret, and young George singing 'John Peel,' the old Squire and I joining in the chorus; I remembered—how ashamed I felt, too, at the bare recollection!—that I upset a cup of coffee when we went into the drawing-room all over Mrs. Golightly's beautiful yellow-satin sofa; and, lastly, old Golightly telling, with great glee, a story of one of my cloth, who, he was pleased to say, was out-and-out the best parson he ever came across.

'He came over here one day, Sir, to have a look at the hounds, at the time when I was master. Well, he had a horn or two of my old ale; then we went to the kennels, then we came back to lunch—more strong beer, to say nothing of brown sherry. I never saw such a beggar to drink in my life, Sir. Well, I got him so screwed at last that it was all he could do to get on his pony. "Won't you have anything before you start, parson?" says I, sinking the liquor he had already had. "Well, Squire," says he, giving a lurch that nearly sent him out of the saddle, "you're very good; that old ale of yours isn't bad, but its *devilish hard*, and—as you ask me—I think I *will* have a wee drop of brandy and water to correct it." Dammy, Sir,' wound up the Squire, with a hearty bang of his fist on the table, '*that's* the sort of parson *I* like! one of the good old-fashioned sort and no mistake—heh?'

And then, horror of horrors! a dim recollection came over me that, in the course of the evening, I had accepted the Squire's offer to mount me to-day with the hounds on his pet cob, Sir Harry.

Too much disgusted with myself to try and recollect any more of last night's sayings and doings, I laid my aching head once more down on my pillow, and quickly fell asleep. Asleep, did I say? Yes! but not for long. I don't suppose I had been in the land of dreams ten minutes before I was awakened by about the most hideous din that ever was heard by mortal man—marrowbones and cleavers were nothing to it. It was the loud blowing of a horn, the barking of several dogs, and a series of yells from a human voice, that woke me. 'What can this be?' I thought. I was not long in doubt. Hark! whoever they are, they are in the passage. My door was suddenly burst

open, apparently with a kick, and in rushed, pell-mell, a perfect mob of dogs, all fox terriers except one, and he was just about the ugliest bulldog I or any one else ever saw. Close behind them was my hopeful pupil, a hunting-whip in one hand and a tandem-horn in the other. 'Yooi wind 'im! Yooi push him up! Harve at 'im, my beauties!' yelled he at the top of his voice, and then treated me to such a solo on the horn as fairly made me put my fingers in my ears to prevent being deafened for life. The terriers were tolerably well behaved, but the beast of a bulldog, taking his master at his word, seized the bedclothes in his teeth, and hauled away until he had dragged them clean off the bed, to, I regret to say, the intense delight of my volatile pupil and my proportionate disgust. 'Hooray!' shouted George. 'Go it, Cribb! tear 'im and eat 'im, my boy! Look at him, Softly! ain't he a beauty? Ah! would you, you brute?' Crib had suddenly turned on one of the terriers, and was shaking the life out of him: forthwith the hunting-whip was brought into play with full effect, but Crib bolted out of the room, followed by his irate master, who, in his turn, was followed by the rest of the gang—I can call them nothing else. I then locked and bolted the door, and proceeded to dress in peace.

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MR. SOFTLY—HIS DIARY.

*Cockalorum Court.*

*November* —. I can conscientiously say, that never since I had the whooping-cough have I had such a bad day as this in my life. The hounds met here this morning, and the Squire, not having forgotten, as I was in hopes he would have, his overnight offer to mount me, insisted on my going hunting with the rest. I tried to get off on the score of the weather—it rained cats and dogs; so bad was it that the huntsman and whips wore their caps with the peaks behind to prevent the rain getting down their necks. *No go.* The Squire would take no denial; so, at his suggestion, I put on a pair of his top-boots over my trousers, and a great coat over all. Before we started took some mulled ale, by way of what George called *jumping powder*. Rather think Sir Harry (the cob) must have had some too. Trotted off to a small covert just outside the park. No sooner were hounds in at one end than fox was out at the other. Such a to-do! Sir Harry bolted, and, my fingers being cold, the reins quite slippery, and it being downhill, I could not stop him, and he went slap through the middle of the hounds,



scattering them right and left, just as they were streaming out of covert. The M. F. H. and his huntsman both rode after me, swearing most terribly. *Such language!* The Commination Service not in it. I heard the huntsman say to his master, as Sir Harry gave them both the go-by, '*There's a brook at the bottom of the hill, and he'll be drowned in another minnit, please goodness!*' Pleasant! but nearly true, notwithstanding. Sir Harry stopped short at the brook, and shot me right over his head into the middle of it. Grinning rustic on the other side fished me out. Huntsman, as he cleared the brook, shouted out to me, '*That jest sarved you right—coarse creature!*' [*Mem.*—Left one of the Squire's top-boots in the brook, and nearly cut my foot to bits walking home.]

*November* —. Woke up with shocking cold in my head. *No wonder!* George appeared as usual with the post-horn and his mob of dogs, headed by Crib. Was sorry I was seedy; came in to tell me that the Squire was off after breakfast to the magistrates' meeting, and he (George) directly his father had started was going down to the Red Lion in the village to take part in a sparrow-shooting match for a *fat pig*. Good heavens! Could anything be more disreputable? Tried to persuade him not; but it was no use. 'You won't be mean and tell the old 'un, will you?' was all he said, 'because he won't like it; and besides, I shall be back long before he is.' And away he went, blowing his horn all down the passage, only to return in another minute with, 'I say, old boy, I tell you what I'll do. If I win piggy to-day, I'll keep him on short commons and hunt him every day with Crib until he's as lean as a greyhound; and then you and I'll turn him out, and we'll get on our horses, with a couple of spears, and we'll play at pigsticking in the park. What a lark! eh?'

\* \* \* \* \*

About four o'clock, as I was quietly sitting reading a book in the library, footman came in grinning, with a request that I would step up to Master George's room at once. A shocking spectacle awaited me there. George very tipsy—had, of course, not won the pig; and, equally of course, had lost all his money; and now wanted to fight the butler, who was trying to put him to bed. Left him at last fast asleep, and had to tell the Squire—what was, indeed, perfectly true—that his son was ill in bed with a sick headache.

*November (Sunday)* —. Hardly the day of rest I had





thought and hoped it would be. Church situated inside the park, about a quarter of a mile from the house ; the Squire, as he started, gave me strict injunctions not to let George out of my sight, or he would slip away and not come to church at all. Went to look for him ; found him smoking a cigar and reading *Bell's Life*. 'Lots of time, old chap!' said he, when I begged him to hurry up. '*Saddling-bell ain't rung yet.*' When we *did* start, he kindly offered to carry the Prayer-books, give me twenty yards' start, and run me from the hall door to the church for a sovereign. *Was ever such a boy?* Reached the sacred edifice just in time to offer my services to the Rector. Read prayers for him. Imagine my horror when, from my seat inside the altar-rails, I beheld George, during the sermon, deliberately take from his pocket a pheasant's tail feather and tickle his father's nose with it as that gentleman slept! The Squire kept waking up, and scratching his nose in the most absurd manner, evidently under the impression that a fly was bothering him, to George's intense delight and the unspeakable gratification of all the servants, who were looking on from the pew opposite. After luncheon George proposed a walk ; so taking all the dogs, away we went across the park at what my pupil called 'a slapping pace.' Indeed it was, and I was quite glad when George, after we had gone some distance, suddenly pulled up short. 'To point out to me some striking beauty in the landscape, no doubt,' thought I. 'Come! the boy has some poetry in him after all.' *Not a bit of it!* To my horror, George deliberately proceeded to produce from a large inner pocket of his shooting-jacket a bag, which bag contained a large white ferret, and which ferret my pupil now proceeded to adorn with a collar with string attached. On looking round, I now saw that close by where we were standing was a large rabbit-burrow—a lot of holes, evidently all communicating with one another. Into one of these, George, quite deaf to all my remonstrances, now proceeded to introduce his ferret, having previously placed a sentinel, in the shape of a dog, at the mouths of the other rabbit-holes. 'Now then, we shall see some fun,' exclaimed George, in great glee. '*S-h-h-h! I hear 'em already.*' He had hardly spoken before out darted a rabbit at express pace. Away rushed Crib in pursuit, getting between my legs and upsetting me ; the other dogs galloping madly over my prostrate body after their ugly leader. Back they came after a bit, the rabbit having beaten them, and took up once more their



former positions. An accident now happened, putting an end, thank goodness, to the afternoon's *Sabbath-breaking*. Crib, in his ardour, mistaking the ferret, as he emerged from the hole, for a rabbit, killed him with one bite.

*Mem.*—Had his irate master settled the hideous Crib's hash in return, I confess I should not have been sorry.

*November* —. A young friend of George's arrived this morning on a visit to my pupil. The quantity of strong beer those boys drank at luncheon was a caution. They afterwards went out for a ride; I accompanied them on a quiet shooting-pony of the Squire's, warranted not to run away. Soon after we started, George and his friend suddenly proposed a point-to-point steeplechase. No sooner said than done. Off they went, as hard as ever they could go, straight across country, whilst I, as soon as they were out of sight, jogged quietly home. George brought his horse (a favourite hunter of the Squire's) back dead lame. The old gentleman very angry, and blamed *me* in the matter.

\* \* \* \* \*

On retiring to rest that night, as I raised the bedclothes preparatory to jumping into bed, something sprang up into my face with hideous cries, frightening me for the moment out of my wits. *What was it?* Why, it was a barn-door cock, as I live! *and in my bed, too!* No need to ask who the culprit was. As I opened the door and let the wretched bird out there were George and his friend—'pal,' as he called him—holding their sides and shrieking with laughter.

*November* —. *Good-bye to Cockalorum Court.* Practical joke of last night finished me. Told the Squire directly after breakfast that I had come to the conclusion that I was not the proper person to look after his son, and hinted I should like to resign at once. Should have liked to have added that the only person I could think of qualified to take charge of him would be a rat-catcher, or, better still, a prizefighter.

Left Cockalorum Court after luncheon. George and his friend came with me to the station to see me off, and pretended to shed tears as the train moved on, to the great amusement of the porters.

*Mem.*—The cigar George pressed on me so at parting exploded when I had half smoked it, and nearly blew my nose off.

## THE END OF THE RUN.

*By* SOMERVILLE GIBNEY.

FIRE lit in my room! Well, this is nice!  
 I'm soaked right through and through, and cold as ice  
 It's just the very thing I wished for most;

There's no denying Jack's a rare good host—  
 That ten miles home was anything but fun,  
 And very glad I am at last it's done.  
 'Here, James! Just help me with my boots—they're wet,  
 And stick like wax. Pull hard, man! Harder yet;  
 Hurrah! that's one. Now hold the other tight,  
 And pull away—he's moving—there, that's right;  
 Now fill my bath.'

'With warm, sir?'

'If you please;

Before it stiffness very quickly flees.  
 And when I ring bring up some B. and S.  
 How long is there before it's time to dress?'  
 'An hour, Sir.'

'Thanks, then I have time to spare.  
 Please hang my dressing-gown upon that chair,  
 And pick me out a towel that will scrub.  
 I think that's all. And now then for my tub.'

\* \* \* \* \*

Well, this is jolly! slippers, arm-chair, weed,  
 A roaring fire, and liquor—prime indeed!  
 It's worth that wet ride home to find all this;  
 'Tis more than happiness, 'tis simple *bliss*—  
 A fitting ending to a long, hard day.  
 The meet, to start with, was so far away.  
 It must be thirteen miles to Broughton Wake,  
 No matter which of the two ways you take.  
 We drew that blank, and then went on to Stow,  
 And hung about there for an hour or so;  
 Next, back to Great Thorpe 'clome' our steps inclined,  
 A place that's looked on as a certain find.  
 Not long to wait, for Reynard was 'at home,'  
 And soon it got 'too warm' within the 'clome';  
 So off he stole beside the lower fence,  
 Down to the corner, and away from thence  
 Right through the open, past the osier-bed:  
 The hounds soon winded him; away they sped,  
 And we behind. The pace was rare and fast,  
 Each for himself, and devil take the last.

On through the meadows, with the scent red hot,  
 The field well up as yet, in one huge knot,  
 Until we reached the brook, from shore to shore  
 Some twenty feet—perhaps a little more;  
 And there they came to grief, some nasty spills.  
 The first one *in* was little Charley Hills.  
 His mare refused—*he* didn't—so the two  
 Parted at once, and Charley sped from view  
 Head foremost in the muddy watercourse,  
 His last words being 'Some one catch my horse!'  
 No time for that, so on we went again,  
 Right up to Croxley, without drawing rein;  
 Here he turned short, and made for Cocked-hat Wood,  
 But soon he found that journey was no good.  
 The earths were stopped, so, as a last resource,  
 He set his head once more for Spreckley Gorse;  
 And now we had a check, the first and last—  
 A very short one, for Will made a cast,  
 And Vengeance hit it off, while all did vie  
 In giving tongue, and 'Forrud!' was the cry.  
 Away we went, the field was growing thin,  
 And not a soul but feared he must give in  
 If this went on much longer; but just then  
 We sighted Reynard almost in the Fen,  
 Three fields a-head; his brush was trailing low,  
 And loud and clear rang out Will's 'Tally-ho!'  
 We gained each stride, and seeking a retreat  
 He dragged his steps down Stanground village street,  
 And seeing Miller's door stand open wide  
 He crawled in there, to find a place to hide.  
 The hounds were close behind, and up the stair  
 They raced pell-mell, and in his grim despair  
 The window-ledge he gained, gave one look back,  
 Then flung himself amid the yelling pack,  
 And gamely died. Woo-whoop! it was a sight'  
 And how dame Miller screamed with rage and fright!  
 The hounds had turned her kitchen upside down,  
 Laid low the poor old soul, and tore her gown—  
 (*Yawns*) A little money soon put all that square,  
 And glad enough she seemed (*yawns*) to have us there;  
 And then the long—ride home—all through—the rain,  
 (*Yawns*) I shouldn't care—to go through—that again;  
 And—cold as—ice.

(*Snores.*)


\* \* \* \* \*

Beg pardon, Sir! But dinner has gone in,  
 And they're a waiting of you to begin.

# RECOLLECTIONS OF A CAMBRIDGE TANDEM POST-HORN.

*By* CUTHBERT BRADLEY.

## CHAPTER I.

T was just a fortnight to the 'Two Thousand Guineas,' with which event I shall always associate Charley Whipcord, a member of — College, Cambridge.

The name of his college at that time has escaped my memory; but no matter, for Whipcord during his academic career was unlucky in his choice of college, the rules being too strict for him to comply with, therefore his spiritual pastors and masters constantly suggested he should migrate elsewhere.

We now behold him flitting across one of the spacious college courts, on his way to Tony Honeymoon's rooms, carrying a shocking bad gown over his arm and the dog-eared, battered remains of a college-cap, on his head, 'that dome of thought, that palace of the soul;' the rest of his 'get-up' a combination of the loudest checks and broadest stripes.

Watch him slew round yon corner! There he goes, bang into the arms of the junior Dean!

Great as was the shock, Whipcord's presence of mind and strength of nerve did not forsake him. He saluted with all the gravity befitting the occasion of meeting so great an ecclesiastical functionary and Hebrew divine as was the Dean.

But, unfortunately, this junior Dean, of all others, was, perhaps, the most punctilious. So, after returning the salute, he requested Mr. Whipcord to conform with the rules of his college and put on his gown. A simple and by no means exacting request; but under the circumstances, however, extremely awkward: for held in the folds of that tattered gown was the object of all this haste and confusion, the proscribed 'yard of tin,' a post-horn.

Now, to the uninitiated, it may be explained that certain orchestral and musical instruments may not be sounded in



college before one p.m. or after eight p.m., and the post-horn is one.

Whipcord acted on the spur of the moment, and, motioning as if to put on his gown, was seized with a violent fit of sneezing, and, politely turning his back on the Dean, wriggled into his gown, and cleverly got the post-horn under his coat without being detected. Then, facing the Dean, he, with a most polite bow, said, 'I beg to apologise, Sir, but I invariably sneeze when I get within a yard of any one who takes snuff!' The junior Dean was left considerably astonished at Whipcord's amazing impudence.

Whipcord, his friend Honeymoon, and a few more choice spirits, purposed driving tandem down to Newmarket to see the 'Two Thousand' run, and Whipcord was to be the musician. By dint of hard work he had learnt how to make the post-horn speak, and hoped, by the day, to be able to play in public 'something distinctly resembling an air.'

But to practise on such an instrument in college, without having the authorities down on him, was no easy task, and needed great caution and manœuvring; hence, for no length of time could he confine his practice to one particular place, and this is why we meet him conveying his musical instrument from his own rooms to those of his friend: for he was really in earnest, and devoted much time and energy to his tootlings, and had no desire that his efforts should be nipped in the bud by the interference of college dons. He had blown until he was blue in the face, until his lip was swelled up like a negro's, and his head was all in a whirl; and, as the time when the great event would take place was getting short, he had even hung the horn over his bedhead each night, in case of awaking, when he would occasionally startle the night air by a series of discordant noises, worse than those made by cats, until he fell asleep, literally 'played out.'

Both the night and day porters got wind of the nuisance, and, by carefully watching where the sound came from, had traced it to Whipcord's staircase, and, had it not been for timely warning, Mr. Charles Whipcord would have undoubtedly been found out, 'run in,' then asked to 'call on' the junior Dean, and sent before his tutor, who would have forfeited his musical instrument till the end of term—probably gated him, and put extra chapels on. In the 'Two Thousand Guineas' week, too! ye gods and little fishes!

But Whipcord was warned in time, and so determined to move his music to another quarter. He could not, however, resist just one joke at the porters' expense; and so, before he left, he sent his post-horn to a man's rooms on the opposite side of the court. This man, when the porter was glancing up at Whipcord's windows on the opposite side, opened his, and blew a blast both loud and shrill. Out goes Whipcord's head, looking from right to left, as if puzzled where the sound came from, and roared, 'Short-up, short-up; will you?' and the worthy porter, seeing that the 'young gents' were up to their pranks, wisely retired and patiently waited his time.

After this 'Parthian shot,' Whipcord decided that Number One Court was getting too hot to hold his musical instrument, so we meet him on his way to Tony Honeymoon's rooms in Number Three Court; which he enters, after his usual salute, 'Hail—o!' answered by Tony inside, an octave lower, 'Holl—o!' and flops down into an easy-chair, throwing his cap and gown into a corner. Both are interested in the 'Two Thousand' event, and books are produced, intricate mathematics gone into, the latest newspaper odds discussed, and the last tip wired from Raff, the great sporting prophet, talked over. But, patient reader! I will not trouble you with the odds offered and taken about the chances of the favourites for the Guineas. If you are a betting man, of course you know them all by heart; and if not, as a prophet once remarked, 'Why you won't learn how to make a book by sitting still in your back drawerin'-room!' Enough to say, that each young worthy had his own infallible system of betting.

Business completed, Whipcord and Honeymoon walk down to Bramble's rooms in Jesus Lane, for Bramble is to drive the tandem. He is addressed by his intimates as 'Beetroot,' from his frequent embarrassment and unfortunate habit of blushing when in female society, being more at home with horses and dogs than petticoats.

'Yi—yi—yi-o!' carols Whipcord, to announce his arrival. A chorus of 'yap—yapping' from dogs inside tells that Bramble is at home; the door is quickly opened, when out bundle three tan-and-white fox-terriers, yapping lustily, while a large boarhound bays in the background. Whipcord, knowing the manners and customs of the pack, throws his tattered gown to them with the cry, 'Worry! worry!! worry!!! Don't I wish it was the junior Dean—old Fuzzball!'

'Dry up, you beggars!' is the authoritative command of their master, which secures silence.

'Well, Beetroot!' begins Whipcord, 'we have just come to see if you have completed the arrangements about the tandem?'

'Yes,' replied Bramble. 'I think we shall have about the nobbiest turnout there—two blood bays and red wheels to the cart, my boys!'

'All right, old man! I shall be all there with the music!' said Whipcord. 'Get us a gargle; for blowing that post-horn makes one awfully dry.' And as Bramble disappeared, with the three terriers at his heels, to concoct something moist, he said to Honeymoon, suiting the action to the words, 'Let's ring his bell and see what sort of a looking housemaid he's got, and make him redden up!'

The unsuspecting Bramble returns with a huge pewter-pot and the three terriers, when Honeymoon remarks that one of them has hunted nearly all the hair off his back!

'Yes, poor Jack! he's been ratting,' said Bramble, eyeing the terrier affectionately; 'and he's had rather a rough time of it: but he's getting better now, for he made the Dean's wife's cat "sit up" this afternoon, and all but settled her.'

'Which is your favourite, Bramble?'

'Well, perhaps the little bitch there! Flirt, good beetch! Now she's the sort to carry in your eye—lean head, foxey muzzle, fine stern, small rounded feet, legs well ——'

'Please, Sir, did you ring?' said the maid, Alice, interrupting Bramble in the enumeration of the points of his favourites.

Whipcord and Honeymoon, who observed her come in the room some seconds ago, are doubled up with suppressed laughter. Bramble starts, looks confused, declares the bell has not been rung, and blushes scarlet.

But the two jokers come to the rescue, and admit that they rang the bell, having forgotten the name of the horse that Alice's brother, the jockey, rode when he won the French Derby, and will she tell them again?'

And so they proceed to chaff, when Alice's quick eye detects Whipcord's swollen upper lip. 'Lorks, Mr. Whipcord! who have you been a kissing of?'

Whipcord groans inwardly, 'Oh, that confounded post-horn!'

## CHAPTER II.

THE auspicious morning of the race at length dawns, and about noon Whipcord and Honeymoon, wonderfully attired, wend their way to Bramble's rooms, just to see if any breakfast or lunch is going forward, and his terriers yelp a lusty salute at the entrance of our two young Cantabs. Morning salutations are exchanged, and hopes are expressed that Whipcord and his post-horn feel pretty fit. Whipcord would fain demonstrate the mastery of his accomplishment with a preparatory tootle, but is stopped by Bramble, who is mixing porridge for his terriers.

'My dear fellow, pray don't! My little bitch Flirt gets in such an excited state over music, that she would go off her head for the rest of the day; so, please, don't!'

Breakfast in a 'Varsity-man's rooms is such a meal as one may never meet with elsewhere—not even in Scotland—and therefore a few words about the present one. Bramble, a member of Jesus College, adopts the rising custom of his college, viz. that of substituting strong brewed ale or quarts of shandygaff for tea or coffee; porridge, to lay a foundation with; pies and jellies from the kitchens; chicken and the concomitant ham; sardines on toast, eggs (capital things to breakfast on when in a hurry, as they contain the maximum amount of nourishment with the minimum amount of trouble), 'squish,' or marmalade, jams, and beautiful pats of butter stamped with the college arms; and to wind up, cigars, pipes, and more shandygaff.

After this solid mid-day repast, which, with the prospects of the day's sport, are discussed with much gusto, the trio start for Withers' livery and bait-stables.

The yard reached, Honeymoon and Whipcord go into the bar, just to 'wake up' the two handsome young ladies on duty with a tune on the post-horn, whilst Bramble wends his way to the stables to see what old Withers has 'fit to ride or drive.'

This yard, where the best class of horses were jobbed by the month, day, or hour, 'on the most reasonable terms,' was well known to all the driving fraternity of undergraduates of that day, and Withers' nags got pretty well rattled about and systematically overdriven by the 'youth of the period.'

Withers himself, unlike his nags, was sleek and fat, bearing somewhat of a resemblance to a pot of porter with a head on it. Moreover, he was very good-natured, gave long credit, and it is



said that *some* long-suffering, much-scored-off undergraduates' governors, have termed him a 'dear man.' But to the undergraduates themselves he was all that was nice, with his 'Lor' bless you, Sir! don't mention it! it's a pleasure, I'm sure, to oblige any of you young gents!'

'Now, Mr. Withers!' said Bramble, as the proprietor toddled out of the bar-parlour over the cobble-stoned yard, 'I hope the horses are fit to go this morning: nothing but the pick of the stables will do, you know!'

'You'll have two of the fastest 'osses in Hengland afore you to-day, Mr. Bramble,' said Withers, in an oily, subdued voice. 'I know, Mr. Bramble, as you is fair with 'osses, and knows how to handle 'em, and that's why I entrusts to your care the best pair of goers in Hengland—(Thank you, Sir, I won't say no to a cigar)—but Lor' bless you, Sir! many of these young gents cannot tell a good 'oss from a bad 'un—they overdrives 'em all alike, and brings 'em home smoking. It makes my heart bleed to see the poor dumb animals so.'

'I don't doubt but what you bleed their governors' pockets in proportion afterwards!' ejaculated Bramble, drily, for he knew his man well, and that the stables were not entirely innocent of crocks and screws.

'Oh, shockin'! shockin', Mr. Brainble! you shouldn't say so! But after you with the light, Sir—thank you, Sir.' And old Withers puffed and pulled away at his cigar.

'What have you got in the loose-box?' said Bramble, alluding to the post of honour in the stable.

'The bay 'oss as you drives tandem-leader to-day, Mr. Bramble,' replied Withers. 'He's a new purchase, cost a mint of money: he's as proud as Lucifer, quiet as a lamb, and carried a gentleman with the Belvoir hounds all last season. I should like your opinion on him, Sir.'

Withers opened the door of the dimly-lighted loose-box, and disclosed to view a tall, bright bay horse, with squarish, pointed head, a big barrel, four black legs that showed signs of wear and tear, and a recently docked tail, the dock of which adorned the stable door along with decayed fox-pads and rusty horse-shoes.

'Plenty of him; an experienced horse!' mused Bramble, glancing over the old horse, and wondering why he left the Belvoir.

'He do fill the heye,' went on Withers, seizing at a straw.

'Come' up, oss! stand over!' continued he, clucking and flicking his red pocket-handkerchief, making the bay wince and pick up his feet. 'He's got a wonderful notion of jumping, they tell me—jump anything!' And Withers struck out into space to indicate an indefinite height or an indefinable width, making the bay plunge and start with alarm. Those four black legs looked better in motion, and Withers knew it.

'So-ho, then! quiet, 'oss!' gurgled the artful Withers. 'I am glad that you like him, Mr. Bramble, because I knows as you is a gent that can ride anything, from a clothes-'oss to a rockin'-'oss, and make it *go*, too!'

Bramble was but mortal, and therefore not above flattery, and of course at once pronounced in favour of the big bay, which was what Withers wanted.

'Well, Mr. Bramble, I should feel highly flattered if you would give the 'oss a name,' said thirsty old Withers, who connected christenings with something moist, and had not been talking to Bramble for the last ten minutes without design.

'Call him Coffinhead,' said Bramble, looking at his leader's square, pointed head.

'Most adequate name, Sir! Good luck to the 'oss! Come up, Coffinhead! stand over, Coffinhead!' laughed old Withers at the astonished newly-named bay, late 'Saunterer, of the Belvoir,' *alias* 'Gaiety,' owner unknown. 'You'll come into the parlour, I hope, Mr. Bramble,' said old Withers, leading the way.

'Have the horses put to,' replied Bramble, following, and knowing from experience that christenings meant another item down in his driving account.

'Jim! Bill!' roared Withers, 'concern your buttons! look alive, and put the two bays to the cart with red wheels! Then,' he continued to Bramble, 'we will put the bay mare between the shafts, she's a little light-hearted; but, Lor bless you, Mr. Bramble! you know her little ways by this time. Old Coffinhead will make a good leader, for he is a bold 'oss and a free goer. Capital name, Coffinhead! Ah! ah! ah! Come in, Mr. Bramble. Here, Miss Flasher! Miss Flasher! come and take Mr. Bramble's order!'

Miss Flasher was the attractive young lady in the bar whose charms acted as a magnet upon the youth of the day, who came from far and near to worship at her shrine and swell the coffers of old Withers.

'Ow dew you dew, Mr. Bramble? Pleased to see you,'

minced the young lady, tripping into the parlour. 'Mr. Chawley Whipcord has been playin' most beautiful on his post-horn to us—sech variations!' continued the charmer, busying herself with Bramble's order.

The two bays are soon harnessed to the tall dog-cart, and are waiting outside, impatiently scraping the stones and champing their bits, as the stable-boys stand at their heads. Honeymoon gets up in front and lights a big cigar, Whipcord, with his post-horn, and a friend who has just been induced to join the party and act as ballast, sit behind, and Bramble mounts the driving-seat, the stablemen jump from the horses' heads, the bays plunge forward, old Withers smiles with satisfaction, and the pretty young barmaids wave their pocket-handkerchiefs, as the smart dog-cart turns into the street.

Whipcord's music informed every one of their approach and cleared the way, and also gave the young ladies a chance to rush to the window and peep from behind the dimity curtains.

Thus the cart, with its peacocky pair, threaded its way through the old scholastic seat of learning—the Alma Mater of past and future generations. They clattered past many a grim old college gate and gloomy, glorious pile of mediæval architecture, 'neath frowning towers, pinnacles, and spires, across the open, sunny market-place, down quaint, narrow streets, where students flitted to and fro, and ecclesiastical dignitaries sailed along in solemn pomp.

All along they awoke unaccustomed echoes in those silent college courts, and roused many a recluse to gaze at the merry throng that streamed out to Newmarket.

As our friends were clearing the town they espied in front the old junior Dean going to the Senate House, with two fair nieces walking one on each side of him.

'Old Fuzzball has two fine fillies there,' said Bramble, making his horses step out.

'He might almost get up a "Junior Dean Maiden Handicap"—they would run one another pretty close for good looks,' replied Whipcord, who thought he was a judge of pace.

'He certainly handicaps the maidens,' put in Honeymoon, 'for they are both pretending to look down their noses and not see us.'

'I tell you what, old man,' said Bramble, thoughtfully, 'I'm not superstitious, but I take those two black and white petticoats



Junior Dean. "How much better those young men might  
be employing their time and embracing golden opportunities."  
"Nieces" emphatically "They certainly might Uncle!"





as a lucky omen, and shall lay my money on the horse that carries a magpie jacket to-day.'

'Bravo, Bramble! old man! But don't blush!'

The worthy junior Dean toddled along between his two fine nieces, pointing out to them the beauties of Cambridge, and as the dog-cart clattered by remarked, half to himself, half to his nieces, 'How much better those young men might be employing their time and embracing golden opportunities.'

'They certainly might, uncle,' said the two fair nieces, slyly glancing at one another, and heaving heart-breaking little sighs.

'Ah!' chuckled the Dean to himself, as the occupants of the dog-cart stared hard at his two smart nieces, 'young men, we shall meet again, when I'm out on the Newmarket road to-night with my bulldogs!' He was proctor, and would be on the prowl.

But now Cambridge is left behind, and they bowl along the hard high-road to Newmarket—a thirteen-mile drive over a flat, open country.

Newmarket on a 'Two Thousand Guineas' day is not a subject to be lightly treated, and it is not our intention to attempt to describe the exciting incidents of such a day in the limited space of this article. Enough to say that our young sporting Cantabs spotted some winners, and luck followed the magpie jacket that carried Bramble's money.

To get started back from the Heath was no easy matter, and required much skill and patience to induce the other coachies 'to move an inch to the right,' or 'pull on a yard and let the leader's head out of Coventry!' The bay mare was very 'light-hearted,' and there were one or two hair-breadth escapes of being smashed up altogether. But at last, after much dodging, waiting, twisting, and creeping, the high road to Cambridge is reached.

The day is fast drawing to a close, and the horses settle down well to their work, knowing that they will be expected to pass everything on the road.

Whipcord plied the post-horn incessantly, and as they sped by the halfway public-house they created nearly as much excitement among the occupants of the vehicles waiting there as the race for 'the guineas' did.

Old Coffinhead made a very steady leader whilst it was broad daylight, but as soon as it was dusk, and a pale moon shed a silvery light, he saw the objects of nature magnified and

burlesqued, from the effects of cataract in one eye and something else in the other.

First the old horse took alarm at a stone heap on his right, and swerved to the left; then he saw one on his left, and swerved to the right; and so zigzagged along, pulling up at broad beams of light cast across the road, then wading through them as gingerly as if they were water and he was afraid of splashing himself; and as the bay mare was inclined to bolt, it was no easy matter to keep the shafts out of the leader's quarters.

When at last he rose to jump a ray of light cast across the road through a hole in a shutter—verifying his present master's opinion that he had a wonderful notion of jumping—Bramble thought it was time to pull up and have him unharnessed and tied behind the dog-cart.

The lights in the town of Cambridge could now be seen. Dusk is the hour when Cambridge is delivered up to the mercies of prowling proctors, with their bulldogs, on the look-out for whom they may run in, and fine for infringements of the University regulations.

Bramble had not driven the bay mare very far, and Whipcord was astonishing with a melody from the post-horn the star-dazed Coffinhead tied behind, when suddenly the Proctor's bulldogs stepped into the road, and the bay mare had to be pulled up on her haunches, and old Coffinhead, startled by the sudden stoppage, whisked round, and stood with his tail to the back of the cart and his head towards Newmarket.

Up came the Proctor, with the usual obsequious flourish of his cap. 'May I inquire if you are a Member of this University, Sir?'

'Why, c'tainly!' replied Bramble, making undue parade of putting up his eye-glass, and bending forward to further inspect this little lump of aggressiveness, that had the audacity to stop him in his homeward career.

'Then, Sir, I fear I must trouble you for your name and college!' said the Proctor, pulling out a small note-book.

'Preamble of Jesus! Anything to pay?' retorted Bramble, wagging his tail.

'Probably,' said the Proctor, taking up the vein of humour. 'Let me remind you, Sir, that the eighth deadly sin is that of driving tandem!'

'Pardon me, Sir, but I am not driving tandem,' said Bramble, casting a withering glance at the Proctor. 'You are mistaken!'



Robert Bradley

To see us drive back to Cambridge created nearly  
as much excitement as the race for the guineas did.





one horse is tied behind the vehicle, my friend behind drove him down to Newmarket, whilst I drove this one back. So you plainly see, Sir, that it is a one-horse vehicle, whichever way you take it!’

‘Ah! Sir,’ said the Proctor, ‘but for all that, yours is a complicated malady. Smoking, being without cap and gown, and, if I mistake not, Sir, that is a tandem post-horn the gentleman has behind; so I am afraid, Sir, that I must request you to call on the Dean to-morrow morning! Good night, gentlemen!’

And Whipcord’s remark, as they talked it over that evening, whilst enjoying a quiet little dinner at Bruvat’s, was, ‘Bust my buttons! if that old junior Dean, Fuzzball, didn’t have us on toast after all: he must have known we were uncommonly flush of cash; but we’ll drink the health of old Fuzzball’s nieces in the magpie-coloured petticoats.’

Bramble blushed, and did so.

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## OSTRICH HUNTING IN SOUTH AMERICA.

*By G. B. BEAUMONT.*

**I**N some recent numbers of the *County Gentleman* there appeared an interesting account of Ostrich Farming as a new and lucrative industry in that ‘land of the future and varied resources,’ South America. The African Ostriches, which I was the first to import and breed for these purposes, are much larger and finer-feathered than the native Ostrich, or ‘Rhea,’ whose plumes, though not nearly as long, broad, rich, or graceful (consequently, of less market value), are exported in considerable quantities from Buenos Ayres and Monte Video, principally to the United States and English markets. Although thousands of these birds are yearly killed for their feathers by the ‘Gauchos’ and Indians, they are still found in considerable numbers over the greater part of the Argentine Republic and the whole of the Uruguay, where, as there are no Indians, the Rhea is still very numerous, notwithstanding that they are shot by the Italian and French inhabitants solely for their feathers—a proceeding likely to lead before long to the total extermination of a valuable species of game, which, pursued in the legitimate manner of hunting or chasing (*i.e.* the catching of the ostrich with the ‘boleadores’),

affords one of the most exciting, manly, and interesting of sports, besides the profit of the feathers cut from the birds before being liberated.

Throwing the 'boleadores' is an art not easily acquired, and it is seldom that foreigners—that is, English and other settlers, or travellers—are seen to handle it properly, and secure their game skilfully, unless after considerable practice. But to the large number of Englishmen out there, who carry with them their native fondness for outdoor exercise, Rhea hunting offers the never-failing inducement of hard riding and capital sport. But to be able thoroughly to enjoy a run with the Rhea a man must be a plucky, straight rider, have good horses with plenty of speed and endurance, and decidedly sound in the wind; which, I may add, the horses here usually are, a broken-winded horse being seldom heard of, at least on the 'estancias,' or runs. As a matter of course, he must either be an expert with the 'boleadores,' or be accompanied by a native skilled in its use.

There are several kinds of South American 'boleadores': those made with three balls, of either stone or wood, and covered with one or more layers of raw hide, are for capturing horses, bulls, cattle, &c.; whilst those for catching ostriches are seldom made with more than two balls, sometimes of stone, but mostly of lead.

To make an ostrich 'boleadores,' two small hen eggs, or those of the partridge (and these plump birds abound here), are requisite. The eggs are first sucked, and the shells then filled with molten lead, as you would a bullet-mould. These balls are next covered with raw hide, made pliable by soaking, and, when well stretched over the ball, secured at the small end by a thong of mare's hide.

A fine cord of from six to eight feet in length is now made out of three fine cowhide thongs, each of these being well twisted before twisting the three together. And to each end of this hide-cord a ball is fastened.

And now, having explained how the 'boleadores' are made, I will give a short sketch of one of my numerous ostrich hunts, and the use of this simple but ingenious weapon.

One fine afternoon in August, having determined upon sport, I ran the horses into the 'corral' yard at sunset, and securing two, put them on tether for the night.

It was my custom to keep for this and similar purposes from fifteen to twenty of what the 'Gauchos' (natives who earn a

living on horseback, working cattle, horses, mules, &c.) call 'Pingos,' a name applied to first-class horses, just as 'Mancaron' is to screws. Breakfast at daybreak consisted of coffee, beef-steak, and eggs. Biting my horse and strapping a rug on his back with a surcingle was short work, and mounting, away we went—that is, myself and a couple of 'Gauchos,' each provided with two pairs of 'boleadores.' It was a beautiful sunrise, and as we rode along at a quiet jog-trot we could distinctly hear the booming of more than one male ostrich, which it was our ambition to meet, as they not only give a better run, but their handsome white plumes are far superior to those of the females, who, from five to eleven in number, usually accompany the male birds.

Male ostriches challenge each other with this booming as cocks do by crowing, and approaching first quietly step by step, until they get pretty close, they then rush at each other.

As we went along smoking and conversing about the luck of different runs after ostrich, deer, bulls, wild mares, &c., I remarked to my men, Domingo (Sunday) and Xisto, that it was some time since we had heard the last boom, and what a game it would be if the two rivals had met, and were fighting it out for the championship, or who should be cock of the walk.

My surmise proved correct, for no sooner had we reached the top of the low undulation before us than we came full on as fine a pair of old warriors as the most ardent sportsman could have wished to meet. There they were, fighting like Turks—or turkeys, I should say; which birds they much resemble in their style of warfare.

Meanwhile, the hen-birds, nine in number, who were looking on, soon saw us, and were off at a long trot; which movement had the effect also of warning the combatants of danger, who instantly unlocked their necks and were off in different directions.

Domingo took the left-hand bird, whilst Xisto and myself made after the other. Our horses as well as ourselves now felt the excitement of the sport, and appreciated it too. Mine, a dark chestnut, 'Alazan Tostado,' had at the first jump off nearly landed me on his tail, for he well knew what it all meant, having measured speed and tested lungs with more than one of those swift curious 'birds on stilts.'

The natives say of a dark chestnut horse, '*Alazan tostado mas vale muerto y no cansado*'—A dark chestnut prefers death



to giving in. And I must confess there is no colour that suits my saddle better, for they always have good constitutions, perfect legs, and sound hard hoofs.

But to return to the ostrich. Away he went, zigzagging like a gigantic snipe, with his wings drooping, and extended from the body to catch the breeze, like the lower studding-sails of a vessel. But soon closing them he settled down to work, seeing we did not mean play. Right through a group of grazing cattle he scudded at railway speed. These, thinking that we were out '*parando rodeo*,' that is, collecting them to a certain spot called a '*rodeo*,' to which it is usual to drive them every few days, so as to keep them tame, trotted off on being thus disturbed. We now came in sight of a native neighbour's '*ranch*o;' he seeing us, ran out of his hut, and was, '*boleadores*' in hand, on his horse in a minute, and off at his best pace tries hard to head the ostrich, and so turn him into our hands.

But not this time '*amigo*' (friend), for the bird simply swerved to the right and was free. My noble native, finding he had made a mistake in horse, bird, or both, dropped to the rear, and with a friendly, but crestfallen look, shouted out to me passing, '*Que le vaya bien, Don Jorge*' (I wish you luck, Mr. George). '*Adios, Don Pancho*' (Good-bye, Mr. Pancho), is all I had time to say, as a doe jumped up just under my horse's nose, followed by the fawn. '*No tire, no tire, patron!*'—(Don't throw! don't throw, master!) sings out Xisto. But it was too late. I could not resist the temptation, and there lay the hind secure enough until we could attend to her on our return.

'Now, Xisto, you shall have the next throw; and, unless you miss, I'll keep my reserve pair of "*boleadores*" for another day, should nothing more turn up.'

Xisto laughs broadly, as well he might, at the bare idea of his missing an ostrich. A spur of rising ground now lay before us, which the ostrich evidently does not like the look of, for he tries to turn, first one, then the other side; but without success, for we were well apart, and so kept him straight, though he still had a lead of a good two hundred yards. 'We must have him, Xisto,' I shouted, 'and that too before he tops the rise, or we are beaten.'

We now, for the first time since our start, called upon our horses, although the grass had not been growing under their feet. Slowly, but surely, we gained on our long-legged friend, and a fine game-bird he was. 'No drooping of wings as yet,' I

remarked to Xisto. 'No,' he replied, 'he is *guapo*' (plucky). Now we were about half-way up the rise, and again the bird tried to double down hill, but I intercepted him with a shout in Spanish, which had the effect on our horses that a good tally-ho! has on an English hunter. It was an exciting moment, for we must not, if we can possibly help it, let him top the rise out of throwing distance, and again we try the 'persuaders,' which has the desired effect. That spurt did it. Xisto leant forward, the 'boleadores' in full swing. I almost hoped he would miss; but no such luck for me, for in an instant the ostrich rolled over! A strong bird, and no mistake, and such feathers! Rising on his one free leg, he falls—rises—and falls again; but it is of no use struggling, so, stretching out his long neck on the ground, he takes a rest.

Having dismounted, we secure our horses, stretch ourselves beside our captive, and Xisto's cigarillos are produced; which were not unacceptable after our sharp run, though I had heard him distinctly say a day or two back, when returning from the 'Pulperia,' a store where everything is sold, from a pair of lady's gloves to a barrel of tar, that very tobacco was too bad even for making sheep-dip of. So, soon throwing away mine, I pulled out my knife, and set to work to rob our friend of his best feathers. If Xisto could have had his way, he would have skinned the ostrich with the wings attached, the natives being very fond of roasted ostrich wings; and they are not bad, though rather oily. But he knew I would not consent to such a wanton destruction of good game, besides being the commencement of the laying season. Having tied my bunch of feathers with some hair from my horse's tail, Xisto holds down the ostrich on its side, while I from the back of the bird disentangle the 'boleadores.'

While explaining this disentangling process, I may as well mention that the 'boleadores' are always thrown at the neck of the bird, and as the balls swing in front they at once catch one of the legs, which in running are raised to the breast, and well forward at each stride, so that the bird is caught by the neck and one leg being bound together. If the 'boleadores' were thrown at the legs only one would be caught, as the stride of the ostrich is so long, and in that case the bird would run away with the 'boleadores'—which sometimes happens. Throwing the 'boleadores' and making them travel in the right direction is a deft sleight-of-hand feat, only to be learnt by

experience. A quick eye, a firm seat, and nice calculation of distance, are absolutely necessary to become an expert. Any one possessing these qualities and first-class horses will find catching ostriches with the 'boleadores' rare good sport.

## SONGS OF THE TURF.

*By 'ROCKWOOD.'*

### THE JUDGE'S SONG.



OF all the pictures on my wall,  
 By far the dearest is to me  
 The one that fondly does recall  
 The days when I from care was free.  
     Oh, beauteous pair!  
     Just see them there,  
 The Dutchman 'tis and Voltigeur!  
     Fond memories dear they upward bring,  
     I hear as then the bell now ring,  
     Now past the post I see them spring  
 As then, when in the Judge's Chair!  
  
 Though dim and watery now my eye,  
     To racing ne'er can I be blind;  
 The struggles that have long gone by  
     I carry still within my mind,  
     Those scenes so rare  
     Beyond compare,  
 And faces bright, and faces fair;  
     Just like the flash of a sunbeam  
     Before me yet as in a dream:  
     And past me quick the horses stream,  
 As when I sat in Judge's Chair!  
  
 Though steeds of long ago have gone,  
     Their riders we shall see no more;  
 The beauteous silks, too, we gazed on  
     Like rainbows when the showers are o'er.  
     I'll not despair,  
     Come age and care,  
 But gaze upon that picture there,  
     And drink of memories dear my fill,  
     And hear old voices that are still,  
     See visions that did oft me thrill  
 As I sat in the Judge's Chair!

THE TRAINER'S SONG.



SARCE in the east the sunbeams gleam  
When forth I wander with my team;  
Let prying touts beware! beware!

No sauntering stranger dare pass there:  
Like harem beauties veiled from gaze  
They gallop 'neath the morning haze,  
Then home, ere yet the day is bright,  
Each one, we hope, All right! All right!

When comes at last the fateful day  
I strip my fav'rite for the fray;  
I watch him walk the paddock round,  
And mark that he is well and sound;  
I see his jockey draw the weight,  
And lead him saddled to the gate,  
Then take my stand to watch the fight,  
With fervent hope that he's All right!

The flag is down, 'They're off!' the cry.  
In vain I look with anxious eye:  
He's not in front—Where is he? Where?  
A moment more—He's there! He's there!  
He's beat! He comes! He wins! He's won!  
Well waited, lad—Well done! Well done!  
Now on the scales, in colours bright,  
He draws the weight *All right!* All right!

THE JOCKEY'S SONG.



HILL your glasses up, boys, fill them to the brim,  
We will have a toast, boys, ere our eyes grow dim:  
While the night is young, boys, ere the hours have flown,  
Here's to all good fellows, boys! here's to friends who've gone!  
Horses that are living, boys, horses that are dead,  
And here's to all the races which we've Won by a head!

*Chorus.*

Won by a head, boys! Won by a head!  
Heart and hand and heel, boys, we thought the heat was dead,  
Till we wheeled about, boys, and the Judge he said,  
'It was neatly done, lad; you've Won by a head!'

Let the course be long, boys, let the course be short,  
So that we are mounted on the proper sort;  
Something that can start, boys, wait or can make play,  
Something that can race, boys, something that can stay;



No matter where he is, boys, lying off or led,  
Something in the end, boys, that Wins by a head !

*Chorus.*—Won by a head, &c.

Now give us courses straight, boys, give us courses clear,  
Whether down or up a hill we've not any fear ;  
Start us quickly if you can, mind and start us fair,  
Then we'll do our very best—that is all our care.  
Do not grieve if beaten, boys, rather say instead,  
It was neatly done, my lad, you've Won by a Head !

*Chorus.*—Won by a head, &c.

### THE BACKER'S SONG.



HE favourite wins ! the favourite wins !'

Was e'er yet cry so thrilling ?

'The favourite wins ! the favourite wins !'

A song come let's be trilling !

Let's sing of Ascot's sunny hours,

Let's sing of Goodwood's shady bowers,

Of Sandown and her vernal showers,

The season that begins,

When heard that call that's loved by all,

That call, 'The favourite wins !'

'The favourite wins ! the favourite wins !'

The field the post is nearing ;

'The favourite wins ! the favourite wins !'

Oh, hearken to the cheering !

He wins, the horse that is our choice,

'The favourite wins !' rings out each voice ;

A hundred thousand hearts rejoice,

With glee each backer grins,

When loud resounds that best of sounds,

That cry—'The favourite wins !'

'The favourite wins ! the favourite wins !'

May such call be undying ;

'The favourite wins ! the favourite wins !'

When horses fleet are vying.

May upright men ride horses straight,

May cheers for aye the victors wait,

May shattered fortunes be the fate

Of each foul knave that sins ;

And may we hear for many a year

That shout, 'The favourite wins !'

THE TOUT'S SONG.



WHEN fades the moon and day doth break,  
At my approach do trainers quake,  
As with my glass I sally forth  
And scan the heath, east, west, south, north.  
I know each horse, his step, his style,  
I mark the pace he goes a mile;  
Yea, every horse I know that's out,  
For I'm what people call a Tout.

Full five miles off my glass will show  
When perspiration it doth flow,  
Which pull up sound, which pull up lame,  
Which finish beaten, finish game.  
Each step, each stride is noted down,  
In time to telegraph to town;  
Ere breakfast-time each horse about  
My agent knows, all from his Tout.

I've ears, too, that will two miles off  
Tell every horse that gives a cough,  
When winds are broken; every wheeze  
I catch from e'en the gentlest breeze:  
Tell horses when they're off their feed,  
Tell mares when they have gone to seed,  
Tell owners when they've got the gout—  
There's nothing hidden from the Tout.

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THE STARTER'S SONG.



WHEN I the scarlet banner hold,  
And gay the mettled steeds are prancing,  
Would I my lot exchange for gold,  
Or rubies rare, or diamonds glancing?  
Ah, no! Give me the turf so green,  
The well-cleared course, the posts between,  
The straining horse, the jockey keen—  
What life then more entrancing?

Some steeds are struggling to be free,  
Some backward to my flag are straining;  
Some riders fix their eyes on me,  
Some warily are listless feigning,  
As careless whether left behind.  
They vainly try to read my mind,

And dash away with speed of wind,  
Again for to be backward reining.

At last together all in line,  
The flag is dropped midst bliss enthralling;  
Now bold they rise the steep incline,  
Now sink they where the course is falling.  
'They're off!' 'They come!' resounds the roar,  
Like surf upon the rock-bound shore;  
A moment more the race is o'er,  
The winner's name the crowd is calling.

### THE HANDICAPPER'S SONG.



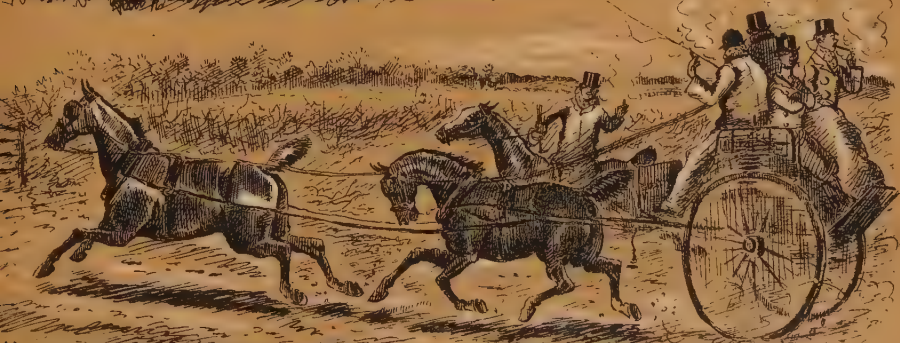
HAD toiled at the table and studied each stable,  
I had worked at the entries the whole of the day,  
With the lowest 5.7, the top 9.11,  
I thought to an ounce that I each one did weigh.  
Not one owner or trainer, I fancied, complainer,  
A big field, a close finish, the handicap read;  
No scratching nor fretting, a good race for betting  
Said I to myself, as I hied me to bed.

But as sleep it stole o'er me, I saw one before me  
Who cried in hoarse notes, 'Two to one barring one!'  
And his voice it so jarred one, says I, 'What's your barred one?'  
Quite anxious to find out the mischief I'd done.  
Then he said, 'Have a care, Sir; you've let in a mare, Sir!  
Yes, in with a pitchfork a mare you have thrown,  
And spoiled the whole race, Sir;—I say to your face, Sir,  
You've let in a mare that could give them a stone.'

Then at length came the bell, sounding like a death-knell,  
Soon the cries loud arise, 'The favourite walks in!'  
Yes, there by a distance, without whip or assistance,  
She cantered in lightly, and easy did win.  
Then a sweat crept all o'er me, I saw all before me,  
And I made to slink off, so real did it seem,  
When a voice shouted loud; 'Sir, *Nightmare's* beat the crowd, Sir!  
And I jumped up awake to find it a dream.



Yes! two guineas worth from Charlie Symonds. Bloyes.  
 not much worth to speak of - but can jump like



Lecture! Who the doose would go to lecture, with the Heythorn  
 at Bradwell Grove.





# OXFORD OLIM, OR OLLÆ OXONIENSES.

By 'TRIVIATOR.'

**W**HO is the author of that most spirited ditty which was an immense favourite at 'wines 'and 'supper-parties' at Oxford, in the days of Consul Plaucus, and which is, or was, I fear, responsible for many an orgie, and for many a practical joke played upon Dean and Dons? I refer to the once famous song which began thus: 'At Oxford a freshman so modest,' and recites some of the episodes and vagaries of undergraduate life; carefully eschewing, however, all notice of literature and lectures, of classics and the classes—of the wooing of the Muse, or even 'the loves of the Triangles.' We know from internal evidence that it was composed before railways entered, so to speak, into our daily life and locomotion; that 'Jack Adams, who coaches so well,' was then flourishing on box and in bar; and that there was an enormous gulf fixed between the Alma Mater of that date and the present more catholic and cosmopolitan institution; though this gulf is bridged over by the pastimes and pursuits which link one generation with another, for the glorious old river like Virgil's oak,

*'Multa virum volvens durando sæcula vincit,'*

and flows on for ever, reckless of the men that come and the men that go, with its painful passage at 'the Gut,' so dreaded by nervous and vacillating coxswains, and its deep broad reaches between Sandford Lock and Nuneham, where victorious 'eights' get their education in 'paddling' and 'spurting,' and learning 'to come again' at the supreme call like a genuine racehorse nearing the winning-post. Then Tar Wood and Bradwell Grove remain still to stir the undergraduates' pulses, and to educate them in the sister arts of riding straight over walls and vale fences, and of driving tandem with consummate judgment of pace and discriminating dodgery of Proctor and Bulldog, while Bullingdon Common and Cowley Marsh still retain their verdure and elasticity for the wielding of the willow, and those pleasant little 'flutters on the flat,' when Briggs of Balliol, Scroggs of Skimmery, Cotton of Christchurch, were held by their enthusiastic admirers to be *only* seven

or ten pounds inferior to the Butlers, Flatmans, Rogerses, or Archers of the day!

To that Palæozoic period I belonged, gentle reader, and I purpose to reproduce a few reminiscences of those *mutata tempora*, eschewing with the song I alluded to just now the serious side of Oxford life, its studies and scholarships, its learning and lectures, its 'coaches' and classes, the success of its 'saps' and the pleasantness of its πολλοι, or passmen, and will commence my story by saying that on the eve of the Easter Vacation I saw on my mirror a card, that ran thus :—

Mr. Thruster.

Trinity College.

with 'Wine' inscribed above it. Now let me further inform the peruser of this page that I was a 'modest freshman,' green as grass, and ductile as 'wax to receive the impression,' but hardly as tenacious as 'the marble to retain it;' that I was perfectly unaware of the rules and regulations which guide academic life in a vacation spent *in gremio Almæ Matris*, and that I fancied vacation meant a temporary and quasi-relaxation of all those ordinances and ceremonies of daily life which were *de rigueur* in term time. So after dinner in hall, by no means a Sybarite affair, I strolled down to Thruster's symposium—not in college, for Thruster had held his rooms there as long as it was possible, and was lodged luxuriously somewhere near 'the High'—and met there a few undergraduates like myself, and a few 'sporting characters,' who seemed to be deeply versed in the arcana of betting, whose talk was of 'equine equations' and of mysterious calculations, which to my unsophisticated soul were as imposing and bewildering as astrology or astronomy. All university 'wines' are, as a general rule, uninteresting; though the mixture here gave a livelier character and colouring to the assembly than the usual muster, when Christchurch seldom has the chill off, even though Brazenose become Bacchanalian; Oriel, Olympic; Trinity, Thrasonic; or Balliol Braggadocian: but the capped and gowned had for the most part departed with the usual 'Ta, ta, old fellow.' A little supper followed, and the thirst which 'the fruity port,' succeeded by anchovy toast and devilled biscuits, had generated at the 'wine,' made one's pulls at the silver tankards and the seductive

cider cup more genuine than ceremonial and perfunctory. 'Vin John' is a seducing game, and the small hours soon give way to their longer brethren under his influence. Nor can I say now whether the fifth or sixth hour had struck when I was curled up on Thruster's sofa, with a rug or cloak for a counterpane—'*Ludo somnoque gravatus.*' One can do a vast amount of repose in a couple of hours, and when the *donna del fuego* came to do the matutinal grate, off I started for my college, unconscious of infraction of the statutes of Alfred the Great, Edward the Confessor, Cardinal Wolsey, or any other legislator or 'founder.' Alas! ignorance of the British Constitution is no valid plea at law, and ignorance of Oxford Ordinances was in itself culpable. 'The Dean wishes to see you at once, Sir!' said my scout, who, faithful to his trust, had reported the unrumped pillow, the neglected tub, and 'the sported oak,' to that academic adjutant, when I had duly sacrificed to Hygeia and the Graces, and cleared a rather perturbed brain by strong tea and 'commons.' I tapped gently at the Dean's door and inquired what he wanted to see me for. 'I sent for you, Mr. Robinson, because Brown reported you as absent from College without leave or license, and you must know what a serious offence that is.' I told him my story, and it came forth so naturally, and with so much verisimilitude, that I think he was convinced of its genuineness; so his sentence was a mild one—banishment from hall and rooms—a *mensâ et thoro*—till term time, when 'the common room' would sit on the case and determine the sentence. I, however, thanked him, put money (it was a small sum) in my purse, some clothes in a portmanteau, then chartered a trap and set off for that little city of refuge, famous for its Romance, its gloves and glovemakers, its palace, pictures, and, more recently, illustrated by the pluck and patriotism of its representative senator, of whom it may be said, in the language of the mellifluous Mantuan,

*'Ingentes animos augusto in pectore versat.'*

Sir Walter Scott glorified *Woodstock*, and, of course, there was the 'Bear Inn' to the fore. Whether the fitness of things (according to the Canons of Capel Court) caused the opposition hostelry to be named 'The Bull,' I cannot at this distance of time recall, but both inns, or hotels, were full—chokefull of Oxford men: some, I ween, supposed to be reading hard for 'greats' or 'smalls;' some, perchance, banished, like myself; more, I trow, voluntary exiles: but whatever the cause of their



selection of this 'camping-ground'—whether it was 'Little Go' or 'Great Go,' or the chimera of 'a class'—certain it is that there was much 'go' in these 'Varsity vacation vagrants, and that under their auspices Woodstock lost its wonted Sleepy Hollow characteristics.

*Ay de mi!* These were the days of the *Fratres Simmonds, par nobile fratrum*, indeed! Charles the courtly and complaisant, and George the genial, jovial, and good-natured. And so long as their yards were full of hacks and hunters, trappers and tandem leaders, and Credit ruled the roast, why should the un-offending undergraduate pad the hoof like a meaner mortal? Was not Pegasus the hack that carried up poets to Parnassus? and why should the flower of British chivalry be *sans chevaux*?

'What's a fox without a gorse?

What's a man without his horse?'

So horses were forthcoming, and be sure, between 'grinds across country,' hunting and hacking, they were not kept in that plethoric condition of inaction so fatal to the high-class hunter. One of these rides led to an unpleasant little adventure, not over-sportsmanlike, I must say, or creditable to our 'chivalry;' but as we were riding outside the Park of Blenheim a bouquet of pheasants were seen collected together some fifty or sixty yards from the road.

'By Jove, I'll have a shy at them!' said Jones, who was nearly as good a shot with a stone as those Benjamites we read of with their slings; so Jones got off and 'fired' a stone into the 'brown' of them. All the birds fled away incontinent, save one noble-looking cock, who scorned the stones and stoner, and crowed a proud defiance. It was a swanlike note and a dying dirge, for Jones, who had got the range, knocked him over with his next shot; and having too much humanity to leave the poor plucky bird in mortal agony, he wrung his neck and put him in his shooting-jacket pocket.

Turnpikes have their keepers, and the latter are not always friendly to undergrads, who have a nasty trick of essaying the *bill*, direct what time they are afflicted with the want of pence, that occasionally vexes both public and private men. At any rate, this keeper kept not his or our secret, and Jones, duly identified, had to do penance in a white sheet (of paper), and to apologise most abjectly for 'casting the first,' but more especially the second 'stone,' and the law did NOT take its course—threat so fearful to ambitious and undisciplined youth.

'The fittest study of mankind is man,' says, or sings, the moralistic poet. We thought so, too, and we agreed that though the study of our species might not lead to high honours at the University, still it was profitable for after-life, and far pleasanter than syllogistic science or those mnemonic monitions, *Barbara celarent Darii ferioque prioris*, which were to be the weapons of our wordy warfare at the bar or in the senate. So we, too, began our studies at the bar by occupying a bench or two in the taproom of 'The Bull,' where a motley and miscellaneous crowd were drinking and singing, smoking and talking. Of the songs, one or two keep their hold on Memory's seat, though I do not think I have heard them trolled forth since, and their refrains were, 'I've got a soft place in my yead' (head), and 'With my master's gun, my master's gun, I fought my way to glory.' I think I must have had a soft place in my head that night, for by morning I had bought, or promised to buy, a mare, said to be a wonderful jumper, for 'the ridiculously small sum,' as Montague Tiggs would say, of 25*l.*, and that 25*l.* by no means all cash; nay, I think cash hardly entered into the deal at all, save, perhaps, by way of earnest. At any rate, the mare was not seen till next day, when she turned out to be a small Arab-like, flea-bitten grey, about 15-1, age forgotten, with a good mouth and fair manners, some galloping power, and such a faculty and love for leaping that I believe the plains of Boyle must have been her birthplace, rather than the savannahs of Arabia Felix. I suppose she must have had some great drawbacks if offered for sale in the horse exchange; but ignorance and inexperience hid them from my friendly view, and jumping came so naturally to her, that I believe if she had been invited to jump out of the parlour-window of 'The Bull' or 'Bear,' she would have sprung out on the area without hesitation or fear.

But to my tale (and a truce to mares' tails and mares' nests, too). We had in our company of vagrants a man of infinite resource, though of most *finite funds*, a *capitalist* in *credit*, but of very curtailed *cash*. But what of that? He wanted *many* things—for he held not to the degrading dogma that 'Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little long'—and he had all he wanted. *Order* is *Heaven's* first law; *ORDERS* were *his*, and they were all executed with a promptness and pleasure that was refreshing to see. His patronage was splendid, and divided among many meritorious merchants and artificers; nor am I sure that if a few gems of painting, modern or ancient,

were on view or sale as he went his gay, jocund round, he would not have 'ordered' them for the decoration of his regal rooms. But then, he was a Triton amongst us minnows, a magnifico amongst meaner mortals, a Paladin amongst pigmies; and that, knowing he patronised me, made me feel a prouder and a taller man.

'That's not a bad little tit you were "stuck" with last night, Robinson,' he said, as he drew me into the garden while he was enjoying a regalia. 'There's not much of her, to be sure; but I hear she can't fall, and don't turn her head, so I've arranged that you shall ride her in a little scurry chase. I've got up a pool of 30s. each, 15 starters and catch-weights. You are a little lumpy, to be sure, but the ground is light; and at any rate you'd *have* to go in any case, to keep the tambourine rolling. Ah! I see'—as I was fumbling for an excuse to get off—'cash is low. Well, I'll find the entrance fee.'

'But, really, I never rode a race; don't know anything about it.'

'That don't matter; you didn't tumble off over that hedge and ditch—I saw you "fly," just now: indeed, you sat on pretty tight; and you won't have any great talent arrayed against you—shouldn't wonder if all baulked the first fence. Mind, lunch at two, and we'll ride out together.'

To hear was to obey. I think I should have liked to *dis*-obey, but hadn't pluck even to attempt it. Clifford was an autocrat. *Orders* again! What could I do but execute them, like the rest? I forget now where the course was, but I think some distance from the village; nor could it have been much over a mile and a half. Clifford was the judge; somebody started us; we ran a kind of horse-shoe course. The very first fence gave me a lead of lengths innumerable. I can recollect galloping round in unchallenged solitude in a sort of dazed fashion, the consequence of excitement and fear, and rejoicing greatly when I saw Clifford, and heard his congratulations. He was a financier, and I'm sure he 'financed' the affair as he 'promoted' it. Perhaps the 30s. entrance-money never was forthcoming from the starters; at any rate, I never saw or fingered 'the pool.'

Poor little Griselda! her instinct and pluck won the heat. I left it all to her superior sense and courage. She *could* gallop a bit; and some weeks afterwards I entered her for a flat race at Bullingdon, when she broke her fetlock in some ratty ground, and I had to shoot her.

Meanwhile life went on gaily. We burnt the midnight oil, but not our books—‘my only books’—you know what Moore sang; but though our economies were wonderful, though we dealt very *liberally* in *promises*, very *parsimoniously* in *payments*, some disbursements *had* to be made when we travelled beyond the *credit* zone into the dreary wilderness of *cash*; and I can affirm that in my own little circle, of which Clifford was ‘*head centre*,’ *lightness* in the money market became *real*, if not absolutely and indecently apparent. *Que faire?* Clifford was equal to any emergency. A difficulty like this only awoke him to exert his latent energies, and *he* resolved that three of our party were to proceed forthwith to town on a visit to some Sanguinetti, Cohen, Mordecai, Levi, or Ahasuerus of the day, and having procured the shekels from Shylock, were to live happily *ever* after, or at least for two months and twenty-nine days. Smith was our ‘Tommy Dodd,’ or odd man: he was a good fellow, but uninteresting, and I suspect was the only solvent, or comparatively affluent member, of our financial board, for Clifford was *criblé de dettes*, and for my own part like Horatio, who ‘no revenue had but his good spirits,’ I had neither cash *in esse* or prospects of pelf, but got along with a quarterly pittance, already mortgaged; and, I may add, I was much under age. Nor do I think I had even been many hours in ‘the village’ before—Clifford managed everything—we ‘descended’ at a Grand Hotel, and I recollect well the shudder of amazement and awe that came over me at the magnificence of the entertainment to which we sat down the first evening. Of course we went *everywhere* at night, and the next day we interviewed the Monetary Magnate. He was very civil, talked of inquiries and references, and told us to return in forty-eight hours. Then everything was pronounced satisfactory, and the cash was to be forthcoming next day; but next day came, and some informality in the stamp caused a postponement of payment; then the cashier was out of town; and so days passed on. Smith had been sent for on urgent affairs, and Clifford and I were left in the Grand Hotel, where he, at any rate, kept up the character and pretension of the Grand Seigneur. He said all would be right. I had faith in him—feeble if not *full* faith.

One afternoon, after another put off from our ‘bankers,’ Clifford said, ‘I can’t stand this suspense any longer; I’ll run down to Oxford and see what can be done there, and you can enjoy yourself in town, Robinson, till my return.’



'Enjoy,' indeed! I was miserable! A few coins in my pocket was my sole wealth. The stories one had read of how defaulting debtors were handed over to the tormentors came surging upon one's memory. To order a sumptuous repast, with wines for every course, seemed adding fuel to fire, and piling up the agony. At dusk I strolled out and looked at the river, and fancied I could understand how men and women, driven by despair, sought its Lethean depths. Sleep! Clifford 'had murdered sleep;' but in any case one could lie in bed and hide one's anxieties and alarms. How time rolled on I forget now, but I was startled from a doze of despair by the cheery tones of Clifford *redux*. 'All right, old fellow! I was detained at Oxford longer than I expected. Get up, old man! to-morrow term begins, and I've arranged we've to be back to-night.'

Who can forget that lovely presentment in stone at the first Exhibition in London—'The night of weeping and the morn of joy?' I realised it, and Clifford was the Ransomer, the Emancipator! We lunched once more like 'men of fortune.' Then Clifford ordered a cab, and put the two portmanteaus he had brought up inside. We made a *Medicean* tour, and the portmanteaus returned to the hotel 'empties;' but Clifford was in funds again, and in high spirits. He paid *our* bill like a gentleman, and the tone of the waiters showed *largesse* had not been forgotten. The Great Western took us to a station some thirteen or fourteen miles from Oxford. There the tandem was awaiting us, and of course the leader was detached near Oxford.

I left Oxford soon after this, and went to 'foreign parts,' and have lost sight of Clifford. Nor can I tell whether he is Governor of Golconda or a Prince of Potosi, but I can only think of him as my Liberator!

## A CRICKET CAPTAIN'S 'FADS.'

By FREDERICK GALE.



THERE is to be seen at the present time as fine an exhibition as regards fielding, bowling, batting, and wicket-keeping, as ever was; but it happens more than often that the brilliancy is dimmed, and matches are lost, through captains following foolish fashions. The worst of these fads is utterly neglecting the boundary

behind the wicket-keeper, so that every ball from a quick bowler, which passes the wicket-keeper, or is diverted by the batsman out of short-slips reach, goes 'into never' for four runs. This neglect is much reprobated by the *very* best men in England, who maintain that if a captain chooses to play without a long-stop to quick bowling, he should do what some of the Northern Counties do, and put a man deep behind the wicket, two thirds of the way between the wicket-keeper and the boundary, who can make a certainty of only giving one bye at a time, and also of dashing across either side and saving boundary hits. One of the best wicket-keepers in England remarked to the writer of this, when the winning hit was made in a close match this summer, 'You lost that match for want of a man behind the wicket.' We all knew that as well as he did; but where *is* the cure, if captains believe no one but themselves?

Another fad is, not using all the bowlers, and changing them frequently when the batsmen are set. Change every twenty runs was the old rule; perhaps, in smoother grounds, twenty-five might be the number: but try *all* who *can* bowl.

Another fad is, putting on bowlers in a kind of 'seniority' order, and *not* consulting the wicket-keeper, who is the *only* man who can tell what change is wanted, as he sees every ball played, and can tell in a moment who is afraid of slows or medium bowling, or greased lightning, as the case may be.

A captain, like a jockey, should have a knowledge of 'pace,' and should not be thin-skinned about changing his bowling. Occasionally we see such a lamentable thing as a slow head-bowler, who insists on having all the men on the off-side, and then deliberately giving the batsman a slow-leg long-hop, wide of the wicket, or even a slow leg, full pitch, and bang goes a fourer to the boundary.

As to the throwing-bowling. The cure for that is summed up in a very few words, as follows:—Cricket is simply an English game, and if County 'A' thinks that County 'B' has one or more than one unfair bowler, County 'A' has simply to say, 'We would rather not play,' without giving any reason, and there is an end of the matter. Cricket does *not* depend on any particular county: it is a national game, and every county may do as it pleases.

## AGAINST RIDING ORDERS.

*By AMES SAVILE.*

**T**HE second impression of Malta, counting as a first the sight of her noble harbour, is three-cornered. The new arrival has slept upon his first impression, which, like all first impressions, is true upon the surface, and has awaked to a corrected version of his feelings : the streets are three-cornered, the houses are three-cornered, and, more important to a sportsman, the cattle are three-cornered. Later on, it is found that the native character is three-cornered ; but the discovery needs time, and Archie Graham was just beginning to make it in the third week of his residence in the island. He had joined the 117th by exchange a fortnight before the Spring Meeting, and it made him more English in his prejudices than usual as he stood to watch the Tradesman's Handicap at 3 p.m. on April 18th, the second day of the Jockey Club Races.

His interest in the meeting was twofold : he was running a horse of his own, an importation from Berkshire, late in the day, and he had a personal share in the race that was to follow the Tradesman's—an Open Hurdle for ponies under 14 hands, for which he had a promising mount.

The month of April, which blinds English hedgerows and brings lambs to obtrusive vigour, blazes upon Malta with a heat prophetic of the unendurable to come, hardens the ground to flint, and puts a stop to condition gallops. It is, therefore, quite possible to run a 'dark' horse at the second Jockey Club Meeting ; and Archie's mount, though he had come to the post before, and was currently reported to be a good pony, might be called a dark horse.

Every one knows the Marsa, that scene of military rehearsals, field of polo contests, arena of equine combats, and remembers how the course used by the Jockey Club extends beyond the canal-bordered turf into the unenclosed garden-ground across the bridges. To-day, despite the advanced spring, a strong equinox, and unceasing work upon it, the race-course still showed comparatively green.

A man may very well attain to the age of twenty-five years,

even with a good seat upon a horse and hands as light as his weight, without the offer of a racing mount, and Archie was as proud of his chance of wearing silk on the top of 13 hands 3 inches as a rising composer may be of conducting his first choral work in public, though his self-congratulation was far less obvious. Orange, green belt, purple cap, has a loud sound ; but Archie looked as fondly at the silk as if Major Bloxholm's colours had been his own choice, and the horse a Grand National pretender instead of an African barb pony.

But the flag had fallen for the Tradesman's Handicap, and the most self-engrossed must rise out of himself and his future in the present of a race that is a 'moral' for his regiment. Archie was alone for the moment, so far as his equals were concerned, and his surprise was great when a hand was laid upon his shoulders at the moment when the seven competitors swung past, and Major Bloxholm's voice said, with sharp distinctness, 'Now or later—I must speak to you.'

'Now, if you can say it here,' answered Archie, his eyes turned to his right front, while he bent his head towards the speaker.

'No, this way,' returned Bloxholm, drawing Archie along with him. He led him in the direction of the entrance-gate, away from the English crowd as from the course, and began speaking in short, agitated sentences, of the prospects of his race. They were interrupted. A cavalcade of three ponies, ridden by an elderly soldier, a young one, and a lady whose age appeared to be even less than his, entering late, passed close to them. Archie looked up, and raised his hat with a pleasant smile to the girl, and a nod to the aide-de-camp ; but Bloxholm dropped his eyes on the ground, a flush passed over his face, and his recognition was automatic. Archie would have spoken, but a detaining movement from the Major restrained him, and the party rode on to see the impending finish.

'Lie up close to your horses, Graham,' said Major Bloxholm, who looked more agitated and spoke more hurriedly than before the interruption ; 'he's not over-fast ! but he's handy ; you'll never make up ground, but you can hold it, and he'll stay.'

'All right,' said Archie, cheerily, though he was considerably puzzled by the nervousness of his companion, whom he had known hitherto as a trifle fidgety, but a good-humoured man.

'But for Heaven's sake win, Graham ! for Heaven's sake win ! Don't forget a word I've told you—don't forget ! He's a trifle



slow, I *believe*, but steady ; I know it. He won't lose an inch at his fences, and if you don't fight him he'll do his work well. But you won't do that, I know—you won't do that,' added Bloxholm, with dry lips. 'Help me, Graham, as you hope for salvation !'

'I'll do my level best, Major ; I will, indeed. I've not much experience, you know, but I can ride a little, and I can generally humour a horse.'

'Only win—this once,' muttered Major Bloxholm. He was too restless to stand, and was pacing up and down as he spoke in short strides.

'Give you my word I'll do all I can, Major,' said Archie, whose good nature was being stiffly tested, and he turned away, but with a cheery nod that smoothed his abrupt departure.

The handicap was over as he rejoined the crowd.

'Well done the old regiment, Graham ! I thought you had it from the first. What a race for second place ! Merry can ride, and no mistake. Did you see the way he took it out of James's mouth ?'

'Which was open as usual ?' returned Archie. 'Very easy that. No, I missed the whole thing—worse luck ! Bloxholm wanted me.'

'Bloxholm ? The Hamiltons have just come on the course ; did he speak, did you notice ?'

'Speak ? Not a bit of it ! What's the matter there, Revell ? He went as near to cutting Miss Hamilton as you could come, and then looked after her as if he would eat her alive.'

'Oh, you know surely. Bloxholm's very far gone—very hard hit, indeed.'

'Anything between them ?'

'Something, but it may be a quarrel. They say she's made him a challenge—to make a fortune, or get the command of the regiment, or to win this very race, for all I know ; something he's not likely to do. Merry swears, though, she's on with Bramscote—says he knows it. Look here, Graham, I've got my pile on you. Pull it off, there's a good one, and cut out that ass Carver. Thinks no one can ride in the island but himself.'

'They've made Cassandra favourite in the lottery,' said Archie. 'You know, I suppose ?'

'No. Have they ?' returned the civilian, who was not a member of the Jockey Club. 'Well, show her the way, that's all.'

'I mean to do my best. The Imp runs kindly, I understand.'

‘A bit queer between the flags.’

‘Is he? I’ve only ridden him one gallop; but Bloxholm says——’

Bloxholm’s only had him six weeks; he bought him to win this race, and gave, I hear, ten guineas too much for him.’

‘But he’s a maiden.’

‘Ran third for the Marsa Plate in December, and put Jenkins out of love with him; but he’s a good pony for all that, I’m sure of it.’

The saddling-bell had rung, and Archie became alive to himself with that sudden sense of his own individuality, from a dramatic point of view, that is the nervousness of a strong imagination. There was a touch of genius in the exaltation that made his head clearer, his hands lighter, his seat firmer, at the moment when action depended upon him for development into success. But the wiry barb beneath him was inspired, on the contrary, by some evil influence to test his rule to the utmost. The pony that would carry a lady to a review or picnic became possessed between the flags by a demon hardly possible to be contained within the breadth, girth, and length, that accorded with his ‘under 14 hands’ of well-balanced height. The start was only made after confused efforts that might have puzzled a professional, and that drove the acting amateur beyond the limits of his patience. Archie got away badly, as the outraged starter was quite willing he should do, and as he inevitably must if he was to start at all, and for the first few minutes he was too much occupied in getting The Imp into his stride, and out of the corkscrew evolutions for which his perverted judgment conceived a straight course to be intended, to be able to do more than see his horses a-head of him, and to realise that he might find the misapplied energy wasted in start wanting at the finish.

The canter past the stand had shown him that of his four rivals he had only two to fear; Charley, a winner on the flat, whose performance in December had weighted him up to twelve stone five pounds, and Cassandra the favourite, a well-bred English pony, long, low, and level, who, if she was not over-trained, looked like justifying the confidence placed in her. The Imp himself was one of those ponies with whom an intimate knowledge corrects a first unfavourable impression. Short in the back and light in the thigh, ewe-necked and heavy-headed, his deep girth, flat legs, and wide powerful loin, covered, when he was in motion, the defects that were obvious in repose. Moreover,

there was no waste of power in his action. He went close to the ground, and he put his heart in his work, and to-day he was in, despite his 13 hands 3 inches, at the easy weight of ten stone. 'You little brute!' muttered Archie between his teeth, 'you're losing ground every moment with your pranks!' and yet all the time he felt the pony growing harder and stronger under him as his own intense vitality communicated itself to the wild little animal; and all the time he had the self-control never to touch him with whip or spur, and to keep upon his mouth a hand as light as air, till temper softened into docility, and opposition was resolved into willingness to do his best for that better half of him that ruled him so royally. The first hurdle—a stiff one—opened up a new light to Archie's eye. Not an inch, not a second to waste, and a perceptible increase of steadiness and pace, with a slight though indisputable gain upon the distant quartette who had been well together up till now. He had been cool enough not to push The Imp at his fence, though he hardly knew if he could jump at all, and now the queer-tempered pony began to conceive that he was out for his own amusement, and his vanity took fire. So at least it seemed to Archie, whose policy, at complete variance with his riding orders, was answering, and who sat stiller than ever with a ghost of a smile on his mouth, and the energy of two men in his supple figure. And now he could take in the situation from a new and interested point of view—that of a place-hunter. Cassandra, who had lain behind up to the point where a sharp turn leads off the bridge nearest to the Harbour, allowing Villiers to make the running on Charley, which he did at a pace that his impetuous nature suggested as the bay's best chance, now came through her horses, and settling down with the long, sweeping stride that was her patent of nobility, drew away slowly from her field. At this time, half a mile from home, the race, as seen from the stand, looked like a certainty for Cassandra. Revell dropped his glasses with half a sigh, and Bramscote lowered his eyes to look down for a moment and ejaculate, 'It's all over with The Imp and his owner, Miss Hamilton!' He had no idea that Major Bloxholm was standing within sound of his voice, or he might have been cautious of using words that had a special meaning. Carrie Hamilton turned half round and looked up at the Aide over her shoulder, and across the line of Bloxholm's sight, with the saucy beaming smile that six weeks ago had been kept for him alone. 'Did you credit me with any special interest in either?' she





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the race had resolved

The Race had resolved  
into a match

such a way





asked with thrilling clearness, and then turned again gaily towards the course.

Major Bloxholm had heard every syllable. He turned on his heel, left the stand, and taking his pony from the hands of his groom's deputy galloped off to his quarters at Floriana. And at that moment The Imp began to do his best. Yard by yard his pace increased, and inch by inch he gained, first upon the two outsiders, then, as he dropped suddenly back to them, upon the beaten Charley; finally, as he closed up to his field, he made it clear to Archie that the win for which he had 'sworn a prayer, and which a minute before had seemed beyond hope, had become a possibility. His chance lay at the last in the line of hurdles that bar the course so close to the run in as to double the advantage he possessed over his antagonist. The race had resolved itself into a match, little as Captain Carver seemed to be aware of it, and now The Imp, with 200 yards in front of him, had drawn up to Cassandra and was doing his best. The mare rose straight and well at her fence, and landed true; Archie was a second behind, and The Imp jumped cleverly before his jockey called upon him. The race still looked like Cassandra's, when Fortune, who had brought Archie safely to that stage to disappoint him when he looked for her favour, flashed upon him a sudden smile. Captain Carver committed the unpardonable sin. He glanced over his shoulder, and for one moment his mare, with the susceptibility the most inexperienced rider has recognised, gave way. As he spasmodically shook her together Archie lifted The Imp in a bare winner.

The yell that rent the air was vociferous, even for Maltese throats. There seems to be a dim perception in the native mind of what plucky riding is, although the native equitation is archaic, and seems rather an ages-long reflection of the camel-driving of its native desert than an accommodation to any accidents of a horse's shape or motion. Archie Graham's riding reputation was to come, but perhaps to the end of his life he never rode better than in his first race under the direct inspiration of genius. As he rode to weigh-in, with a deliberation that put the finishing touch to his artistic performance, the beaming faces of Major Bloxholm's groom and the dozen privates of the regiment who surrounded him as he dismounted, showed him that he had won the suffrages of critics often less generous than men of his own class.

Revell's hand was on his arm at the first opportunity.

'Bloxholm's bolted,' he said with cynical composure; 'thought you were bound to lose; galloped off to Floriana, and by this time has hung himself in his quarters.'

'Nonsense!' said Archie quickly, but he turned pale with the terror of the unknown. 'What's up? Why did no one stop him?'

His day's racing was spoilt, and his innocent exultation, such as it had been, sank to the ground. Only waiting to change, he followed Bloxholm's example, and when his own horse started for the race he had been anticipating earlier with almost feverish eagerness, he had left the Marsa far behind, and had burst into the quarters of his 'owner.' His terror cooled at the sight of Bloxholm, who was as quiet now, with the quietness of a fixed purpose, as he had been excited earlier in the afternoon. Archie met with no recrimination, though it was some time before he collected himself sufficiently to describe the latter half of the race. The end staggered Bloxholm for a moment, but did not change his intention. He left the island with what speed Authority, under the influence of experienced wire-pulling, could be persuaded to concede, and after a short leave procured an exchange into a battalion abroad, in which he served long enough to command it, a few years later, in the field. He left Malta gossip to canvass the congenial topic of Miss Hamilton's sudden engagement to her father's aide-de-camp. Whether she had missed her old lover at the critical moment when she struck home and had enjoyed her triumph, the old coquette never showed. Report was so far true, that it was for her sake he had craved the insignificant honour of a Marsa victory, but his conviction of defeat synchronising with his contemptuous defiance, carried him further from her, at least, than her vanity liked, and it was said later that his gain was Bramscote's loss. The Imp's racing career ended where it began. Under the ownership of his former jockey it is possible he might have proved, that, ridden to his humour and with penalties that steadied him, he was worth backing. So Archie asserted up to the time of next season's training, when his fancy broke his back in a furious charge at polo, and dashed theory, together with his rider, to the ground. The latter rose to his feet with an ungrateful 'Just my luck!' but the former had not a leg to stand on, except in the stables of a castle in the air.

## SANDY THE OTTER-HUNTER.

✠ In Memoriam. ✠

*By* CAPTAIN CLARK KENNEDY, F.R.G.S., &c.

[THE celebrated Otter Huntsman to the Carlisle Pack of Otter Hounds, familiarly known to thousands of Border sportsmen as 'Sandy,' was a few weeks ago found lying dead upon the sward, away in the Cumberland mountains, with his hunting-whip tightly clenched in the hand of death. He was a splendid otter-huntsman, and it will be long ere we see his like again. Heart disease was the cause of his sudden death. He truly died 'in his harness.']



OW sweetly fair Eden for many a mile  
Rolls onward in beauty past 'merry Carlisle !'  
How brightly her bosom at breaking of day  
Reflects in the morning the earliest ray ;  
And hark ! from the bank to that welcoming cheer,  
For Sandy, the hunter of otters, is here !

How ? said you to-morrow the otter-hounds meet,  
Where the meadows are green in the vale of the Fleet ?  
Or near Castle Douglas, away on the Dee,  
Where the river is wide as it rolls to the sea ?  
By meandering Urr, or the water of Ayr ?  
By the Ken, by the Cree ?—We will welcome you there !

Or said you, brave Sandy, the sound of your horn  
Should ring by the Nith at the breaking of morn !  
Will you muster the pack on the Liddel or Sark,  
Where the notes of your hounds shall awaken the lark ?  
Will you cross the Esk river, like 'young Lochinvar ?'  
For, wherever you go, it is 'Welcome you are !'

Hark ! hark to their music ! How wild from the glen  
Sound the baying of hounds and the shouting of men !  
'Tis the 'drag' of the otter : we know he is near :  
How the loitering hounds hurry up to the cheer !  
Hurrah for the master, the pack, and the men,  
Hurrah for brave Sandy again and again !



With a crash they all speak to old Lottery's note,  
 For they know they can trust to her gallant old throat.  
 What a scene of excitement, and hark! what a cheer  
 As it rises and falls on the listening ear,  
 For Sandy has viewed him as dived he below  
 The tail of the pool—Tally ho! tally ho!!

\* \* \* \* \*

Still bright is the sun with its beautiful smile,  
 But sad is the morning in merry Carlisle,  
 For over the mountains the tidings have come  
 That the voice of the huntsman for ever is dumb!  
 Where the streams of the Border run down to the shore,  
 We shall hear the view-halloo of Sandy no more!

Alas! brother-sportsmen, for Sandy the brave!  
 No more may we see him erect by the wave  
 Of each Border river so famous of old,  
 For Sandy, the huntsman, lies lowly and cold.  
 And the breeze sadly sighs on the Cumberland shore,  
 'Alas! we shall see merry Sandy no more!'

In the haunts of the otter for many a year  
 We shall miss his bright eye and the ring of his cheer;  
 All Nature for sorrow seems holding her breath,  
 For Sandy the huntsman lies silent in death.  
 'Tis the wail of the 'whaup'\* as he shrieks overhead,  
 'Alas for poor Sandy! alas for the dead!'

From the banks of the Annan, the Nith, and the Dee,  
 Where Liddel and Eden rush down to the sea,  
 Where the mountains of Westmoreland rise to the cloud,  
 Where their rivers beneath them are thundering loud,  
 The dirge rolls along to the Galloway shore  
 In the saddest of requiems—'Sandy no more!'

Long, long gallant Sandy, the jovial and free,  
 By the men of the Border remembered shall be,  
 Though we see him no more as he stands by the streams  
 We shall gaze on his form in our happiest dreams!  
 Then peace to the grave that the breezes sigh o'er,  
 When we hear their sad whispering—'Sandy no more!'

\* The curlew.

## A DAY'S SALMON FISHING IN ICELAND.

*By* J. R. TENNANT.

**I**T was a glorious morning at the end of August ; the blue turf smoke from the cottages curled lazily upwards, and the white mist hung over fiord and hillside.

What a sunset there had been the night before ! Every cloud tinted from centre to outline, and the whole mass of the sky a blaze of changing colour ; first pale yellow, then orange, and at last a crimson glow of marvellous depth and beauty. One never sees such sights in these more southern latitudes, and it is almost worth while to brave the stormy North Atlantic if only for one look at them.

Before turning in, B—— and I had determined to start for our last fishing expedition to the Laxá, if the weather were propitious ; so this morning, which gave every promise of a lovely day, after getting all our tackle together, and catching the ponies (a matter of considerable difficulty, for the grass near our camp was pretty well eaten down, and they think nothing of straying four or five miles), off we started across the ‘heithi,’ or moor. Two skuas were working the hillside, backwards and forwards, as carefully as a well-broken brace of setters, and further on we see, on the look-out for ptarmigan or duck, a magnificent gerfalcon, the grandest bird of all her race.

A jog of about four miles over a path, rough enough in all conscience, but just distinguishable, brought us to the river, a noble stream, about as wide as the Thames at Maidenhead or the Tay at Scone, clear as crystal, and, better than all, full of salmon and trout.

We off-saddled and tethered the ponies, and then set to work, B—— going down stream, I up, and arranging to fish our beats back again, and meet at lunch-time. The sequel will show that our meeting was not quite so long delayed.

The great difficulty was in such a broad river, and without a boat to reach the fish. Long casting was a necessity, and not, as is frequently the case, a work of supererogation.

(*Mem.*—Did you ever hand your rod to your fisherman, or a friend, who did not immediately let out about three yards of line more than you were using, though you were planting your fly each cast well on to the other side?)

A good taper line and a twenty-foot rod will, however, do wonders, and, despite the continual and merciless attacks of the Arctic terns, who made the most appalling noises, and time after time nearly knocked my cap off, I was soon getting well into, if not over, my first pool. There was a fine stream at the head of it, and the curls of water at different spots denoted good lying ground.

I began at the head, and just where the stream was the strongest up he came, but the rush of water took the fly clean away from him. I gave him a moment's rest; another four feet of line and a good cast goes well over him, and in another second I am fast.

There are only two things I know more exciting than the first rush of a big fish: one, a good start with a flying fox and eighteen couple of hounds in front of you racing over the wide pastures, the other when you are within a hundred yards of the big stag which every one has been after, but has hitherto borne a charmed life. But to return to my story.

I only saw his head, but knew he was a heavy fish at once, and he gave undoubted proof of this by going down stream as hard as he could pelt, and running out my line at an alarming rate.

Surely he will stop at the tail of the pool! There is some terribly broken water just below. Yes! he slackens, and I get in a bit of line, when, turning his head up stream, he races past me, my line bagging behind him, and cutting through the water like the bow of a boat. Then across the pool he goes, and once more sets his head down stream in earnest. No thought of pulling up this time. Into the rapid water he dashes, I careering after him like a lunatic.

The rapids were about two hundred yards long, and full of great sharp rocks. In that seething torrent there was no possibility of stopping, so on we went.

Ah! he's got the line foul of that rock. A jerk, and it comes free again, and far below me I see him turning over and over in the white water.

There is an end to everything, however; and, after dragging me after him the whole length of the rapids, he dashes with a



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plunge into the smoother water of the pool below, where, to my intense delight and relief, I see B——. Help is at hand, I think. I shout; and as I turn to do so I see, to my dismay, that he is also fast in a fish. Here is a mess! I cannot land the salmon by myself, and B——, to whom I looked for assistance, is otherwise engaged, so there is nothing for it but to hang on and wait. My fish, too, is recovering his rapid descent, and seems inclined for more fun, evincing an unmistakable desire to make the acquaintance of B——'s fish, near the tail of the pool; and as I was quite powerless to prevent him, off he went.

A second or two later, and B—— and I are standing side by side, and the following conversation ensues:—

‘I say, what are you doing in my water?’

‘I came here against my will, old chap; but I’ve got hold of a monster, own brother to that fellow we saw at the farm, I do believe.’

I may mention, for the information of my readers, that the fish we saw at the farm weighed, without head or bone, 35 lbs. He was in a tub salted and ready for export.

‘There he is!’ said I.

‘No, that’s my fish.’

‘My dear fellow, *your* fish is a perfect pigmy compared to mine; *that’s* yours,’ as a fish of about 15 lbs. showed himself; ‘and nearly beat, too, I’m glad to see. Do, like a good chap, get him ashore as soon as you can, and come and help me to finish mine, or I do believe he will finish *me*. There he goes again!’ as he made another dash across the pool.

To my great relief I see B—— gradually getting the better of his fish, and after cleverly leading him into a shingly bay I watch him whip him on to the bank.

‘He’s not a bad one at all,’ shouted B——, ‘nearer 20 lbs. than 15, I should say.’

‘All right, we’ll weigh him afterwards,’ responded I, selfishly; ‘but do, for goodness’ sake, catch hold of the gaff and come and look after me.’

I had now been fighting this demon for nearly an hour, and he seemed as full of go as ever; for as sure as I got him a bit in hand and shortened my line, he sailed out again into the middle of the stream, making the reel whirr again, and bending my rod like a sickle.

‘Whatever is he going to do now?’ said B——, as the fish

crept further and further towards the tail of the pool, where the river divided and the main portion ran the far side of an island, while the stream on the near side was far too deep and rapid to wade.

'He means to put the island between me and him, that's what he's after,' I said, as I gave him the butt and put the full strain of the rod and treble gut on him. But to no purpose; something must go, and as I was most anxious not to lose him I gave way, as a last chance lowering the point of my rod and slackening the line just as he was on the hang.

No sooner was the strain off than he turned his head and sailed back into the pool. I had seen the plan tried twice before successfully; what a bit of luck that it should answer again!

After this I had very little further trouble, for though he sailed about in an independent manner for some time, I always had the best of him; and to make a long story short, after eighty-five minutes of downright hard work I had the satisfaction of seeing on the bank the largest salmon I had ever landed. He weighed 34 lbs.; a handsome shaped fish, though not quite so bright as he would have been a month earlier. We then put B——'s fish on the steelyard, and he just drew 17 lb.

After this excitement the rest of the day was by comparison tame, though we each got another fish, besides several respectable-sized trout, which in that country are all as pink in the flesh as salmon, and capital eating.

Our bag should have been much better, but B——'s tackle proved quite unequal to the occasion, and he lost three fish with three separate casting-lines, landing his last fish on a single strand of gut attached to his running line.

So ended our last day's fishing in Iceland, and I think it will be conceded that it was not altogether devoid of pleasure and excitement. I know one thing, that my arms and back ached for hours afterwards; and though it happened ten years ago, I have the most vivid recollection of our final day's sport on the Laxá.

## ‘LAST MAN IN!’

*By* COULSON KERNAHAN, F.R.G.S.

**W**HAT do I think of cricket? Why, I think it's the noblest sport—bar none—of all those noble sports which have done so much to make Englishmen the fine stalwart fellows they are, and Old England the grand country she is. I am afraid, however, that my decision as umpire is hardly as unbiassed and impartial as the decision of an umpire should be; for ours is a cricketing family, and my father and forefathers were staunch supporters of the sport long before the time came for me to appear on the field, and take my innings in the great Game of Life. For life *is* a game, after all—to us sportsmen, at all events. The soldier speaks of the ‘battle of life,’ the sailor of the ‘ocean,’ and the actor of the ‘theatre;’ while the poet sings of the ‘dream of life,’ and the ordinary trudgers and toilers talk about it being a ‘journey.’ And so I don't see why we of the bat and ball should not speak of it as the ‘game of life’ with equally good reason. I am afraid that to a good many of us it's a single-wicket match of ‘all against all;’ but every one has an innings sooner or later, and although there's good and bad luck, as in everything else, yet if we don't score it's generally our own fault. There are good partners and bad partners in the game, as in the real thing; and we've all sorts of bowling to play against. But the training a man gets at cricket—the habit of forming quick, accurate judgments, and then acting upon them boldly and decisively; the command of will, by which he restrains himself from being led away by the seductions and blandishments of voluptuous ‘lobs’ and artful ‘tosses’ (which look so invitingly tempting and easy to play, but will inevitably work his downfall if yielded to); the lesson he learns of the evil of indecision and weakness, and of the necessity of keeping the head and temper cool, and not getting flurried or careless; and, above all, the honest British pluck and endurance that are called into play—all these qualities which he learns in the game contested upon the twenty-two yards of level turf that separate the wickets, will prove of in-



valuable service in the great game played upon the larger field of life.

However, I don't think Mr. Fores wants me to preach a sermon on life, with a bat for a text, as there are plenty of cricketing clergymen (and none the worse clergymen for their being cricketers) who could do it much better, if necessary.

I was saying that we are a cricketing family, and so we are, every one of us. Haven't we a picture in the smoking-room at home of my father in a top-hat, a Gladstone collar, and white ducks, walking from the wicket to the pavilion at Lord's amid the applause of an admiring British public? How on earth, by-the-by, they managed to play cricket in top-hats is always a subject of wonder to me. There is one thing about them, however, which is greatly in their favour, and that is, that you *can* take them off gracefully and *put them on again* in response to the plaudits which await the successful batsman; and I'll defy any one to do it one-handed with the ordinary cricket-cap! If you are rash enough to take it right off, out of courtesy to the public, you must either walk the remainder of the distance to the pavilion bareheaded, with the cap held reverently in your hand, as though you were going to a funeral, or else 'flop' it on your head, to lie there flat as a pancake, for go on properly with one hand it won't.

However, there's the picture of my father so attired, and there's the picture of his elder brother, also in cricketing costume; so I don't think I'm wrong in saying we are a cricketing family, down even to the very girls. Why, when we were all children together, no one enjoyed the cricket in the paddock behind the stables more than my little sister Nell; and even now we have many a sly half-hour's practice there of an evening. She can handle a bat better than most girls can a tennis-racket; and as for nerve, I don't know the man that can beat her. Of course, some of the fine young ladies in the county turn up their dainty little noses, and whisper among themselves that they think it very unwomanly of Miss H—— having her hair cut short in that masculine manner, and being seen so often in the hunting-field. But Nell says she doesn't care, and I'm sure I don't. However, here I am wandering away from the subject again, instead of telling you, as was my intention when starting, about the famous Wexton *versus* Wickley match, in which I had the honour of playing. But even good cricketers often begin the first 'over' with a 'wide;' so, with your permission, I'll try

and get a little nearer the wicket—I mean the point—and hark back from whence I started, with many apologies for the digression.

Well, this Wexton *versus* Wickley match is the grandest event of the year in all —shire. For months before it occurs the probabilities and possibilities are discussed and rediscussed a thousand times over, from our own dining-room at the Hall down to the cosy little bar-parlour in the ‘Wexton Arms.’ Only cricketers born in either of the respective villages of Wexton and Wickley are allowed to take part in it; and fierce, indeed, is the rivalry as to which shall bear away the palm of victory.

On account of my position as ‘squire,’ I am styled President of the Wexton Club; Dennis, our groom, gardener, and general factotum, being captain. We have a nice bit of ground, on one side of which stands a neat little wooden shanty, dignified by the name of the ‘Pavilion,’ and on the other the rose-trellised cottage of honest Dennis. Here of a summer evening you may see the peer and the peasant, the gentleman and the artisan, the squire and his farm-labourers, all meeting for the nonce as man and man in friendly rivalry with bat and ball. ‘One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,’ says honest old Will of Avon; and truly it is a noble sight to see England’s sturdy sons of all ranks and all grades knit together in friendly intercourse by that ‘one touch of nature’—the love of honest, healthy, manly British sport. It is a sight which no game but cricket, and no country but Old England or her daughter Colonies, can boast of; and it is this kindly fellow-feeling which it generates among all classes that makes cricket so essentially an English sport, and raises it, in my estimation, above all other sports. But, as I said before, I’m not altogether an impartial umpire, so I’ll just confine myself to my narrative without any further digression.

Well, the great day arrived, and so did the Wickley team; the former bringing with it the faint, delicious odour of new-mown hay and June roses, the latter bearing the more marked perfume of clay pipes and beer. The Wickley men won the toss and elected to go in—much to our delight; and at three o’clock we had dismissed them all for seventy-three, although our best bowler had been taken suddenly ill, and we had a ‘substitute’ in the field who was of little use.

Dennis and I started batting for Wexton, and we soon brought the score up to fifty-three, when a new bowler was put on, and with his first ball he sent my partner's stumps flying, amid the cheers of the Wickleyites. I was very sorry, as I had hoped that we two should make all the runs without the loss of a wicket; but we only wanted twenty-one to win, and I felt no apprehension as to the issue. However, when the same bowler sent three of our best batsmen back to the dressing-tent with faces as long as the 'ducks' eggs' which were affixed to their names, I began to get anxious, for I could see that a panic or 'rot,' as we call it in cricketing language, had set in among the Wexton warriors. Nor was I mistaken in my misgivings, for a total collapse followed, and when the eighth wicket fell we still required eighteen runs, and the Wickleyites could scarcely conceal their exultation.

I wasn't quite sure who the last man was, so, while the incoming batsman was getting ready, I ran out to our tent to see how matters stood. There I found the tenth man, with fingers so trembling with nervousness that he could hardly hold the straps, carefully buckling his pads on the wrong way. I would rather have broken the knees of my favourite hunter than have lost that match. The two villages were exactly equal, each having won five, and now here was the grand, decisive, conquering game, thrown away—clean thrown away—for want of a batsman with a little pluck and nerve! The player just going in was, I knew, no good; and as for the last man, why, he was worse than useless!

'Look here, Dennis,' I said to the captain, 'you *must* try and find another batsman somewhere in place of that last fellow, who is utterly helpless. Can't you think of some one who has a little pluck? Never mind about his being much of a cricketer. The bowling is easy as child's play. All he need do is just stick his bat in the block, and hold it there as near as allowable. I'll make the runs, if I can only get some one to keep the "sticks" up while I do it. I wouldn't lose this match now for fifty pounds. You really *must* try and find some one!'

'Bedad, sor, and it's nearly bothered out of my loife I am!' responded the trusty Dennis. 'It's a blazing shame, it is; to see the boys laving yer honour alone there, and all for want of a throifle of pluck—bad luck to 'em! Faith, and it's breaking

my heart that I am ; and poor Miss Nell, too, didn't I see the tears in the purty eyes of her ? But divil a man can I think of at all, at all ; and faith and shure yer honour knows it as well as I do myself, maybe.'

Just then there was a terrific outcry that the whole field was waiting for me, so I rushed off, shouting to Dennis that he must try and rake up a batsman somewhere. The man who was at the other wicket (the last but one) was of no use as a scorer, but he managed to keep the sticks up for ten or twelve minutes, during which time I had made a run or two, and then he fell a victim to the insidious subtilty of the slow bowler. My heart sank within me as the telegraph board was rattled down and then hauled up again with the ominous figures, 59 : 9 : 0—fifty-nine runs, nine men out, last man none. I began to get nervous myself as I waited the advent of the last man. Was that terror-stricken young fool coming in, or had the ingenious Dennis found some one else to take his place ? There was a very long delay, and the Wickley men were getting terribly impatient, when a lad came running out to me with a message from Dennis. His cousin, Tom Harding, had unexpectedly turned up at the cottage, having run down to look at the match, and, being a Wextonian by birth, was eligible, and would play for us. Harding hadn't been in the village since he was a child, but I knew from report that he was a fair cricketer, and I looked anxiously towards the pavilion for his appearance. I was just beginning to wonder how much longer he was going to be, when I heard the call 'Man in !' and, on turning round, saw Master Tom advancing towards us from Dennis's cottage on the other side of the ground, where I suppose he had been dressing. A ringing cheer from the spectators gathered round the pavilion greeted his advent, to which he responded by waving his hand very affably and condescendingly. It was some twelve years or more since I had seen him, but I recognised something familiar in his gait as he walked towards us. He was a 'natty' little fellow, although slightly built, and the cricketing clothes which he wore (hastily borrowed, I supposed, from one of the other players) were much too large. His arrival at the wicket was greeted with a roar of laughter by those standing near ; for, whether some one had been playing a practical joke upon him or not, I could not tell, but two thirds of his face were covered with a great black



smudge that had a most ludicrous effect, bringing to my mind the famous 'White-eyed Kaffir.' It may have been (as the umpire at my end suggested) done by accident, and in the hurry and flurry of coming in to play, he had forgotten about it. However, Master Tom did not seem in any way disconcerted by his reception, and, better still, I could not see a trace of nervousness or 'funk.' He took 'middle' with the greatest deliberation; spat upon his gloves in the orthodox fashion, and twisted the handle of the bat round several times so as to get a good grip; had a look round the field to see how the men were placed; and then stood upon guard and faced the bowling.

All Wexton held its breath to watch that first ball. It was the 'demon' bowler's over, and I saw him grasp the leather with a vicious look that evidently meant business, and then send it whirling towards the wicket. My heart was 'up in my mouth,' for the ball was straight as a die, with a nasty twist in it that was enough to take a good batsman at a disadvantage.

'It's all over,' I said to myself; 'that ball will do it, as sure as a gun!'

No! Master Tom just raised his bat an inch or two, dropped down sharply on the shooter, and away it went spinning among the 'slips' for a couple, amid a perfect tempest of Wextonian cheers. The next two, being dangerous balls, Tom carefully blocked them, rather riling the bowler thereby, who got a bit reckless, and sent one down that went temptingly to leg, with the result that Harding let out at it, and sent it whizzing towards the dressing-tent for two.

We went on steadily until we were only a quartet behind, and the Wickley men began to look decidedly 'down in the mouth.' The whispered consultations and ominous signs and beckonings which took place between the captain and his eleven, combined with the critical state of the game, would have made many experienced batsmen nervous; but Master Tom looked perfectly cool and self-possessed, although he had to take the bowling, and every man in the Wickley team was glaring at him as a cat glares at a mouse before she makes her final spring. However, he got a couple from the first ball, amid a scene of excitement such as Wexton has never witnessed before or since.

The two following balls were watched with breathless in-

terest. They were both dangerous, and Harding carefully played them without making an attempt at hitting. The next, however, was less carefully delivered, and amid a thunder of applause that might have been heard in the neighbouring village, he put it away out to long leg. We ran one, thus equalling the Wickley score; hesitated a second, doubtful if another were safe; heard a perfect storm of yells, 'Run it out!' 'Go it again!' and then—crossed the wicket once more, and the match was won!

The spectators, mad with enthusiastic delight, came rushing from the pavilion and refreshment-booth to greet us. I made a bolt for the dressing-tent, thinking Harding was behind me; but when I turned round to shake hands and congratulate him he was nowhere to be seen. They told me he had made straight for Dennis's cottage after the winning hit, where, suggested the village wag, he had gone to wash his face before appearing in public. However, we found he had stolen a march upon us, for when we went over in a body to give him an ovation for his plucky play, Mrs. Dennis came to the gate, and told us he had slipped out the back-way a few minutes before, to catch the 5.45 train back to town. She said he could not help himself, as he had promised to be back by seven o'clock, and only 'got the afternoon off' on that condition.

A party of villagers, including most of the eleven, rushed off to try and catch him before he started, but were only just in time to see the train steam out of the station. They gave him a parting salute of three times three, which was an evident relief to their feelings, although it necessitated an immediate adjournment to the 'Wexton Arms' to alleviate the hoarseness and dryness which the unusual strain upon their lungs had caused.

My story is told with the exception of one little incident, which may, perhaps, interest the reader. I was having a quiet cigar in my own room preparatory to taking the chair at the dinner which was to wind up the day's proceedings, when I heard a tap at the door, and saw the blue eyes of sister Nell peeping shyly round the corner.

'May I come in, Jack?' she said, as I looked up. 'I've got into fearful trouble, and want you to help me out of it.'

Her face was so very solemn and penitence-stricken that I was quite taken aback, and asked her anxiously what was the matter.

'Well, I—I—I've changed my name, Jack, and I hope you won't be angry.'

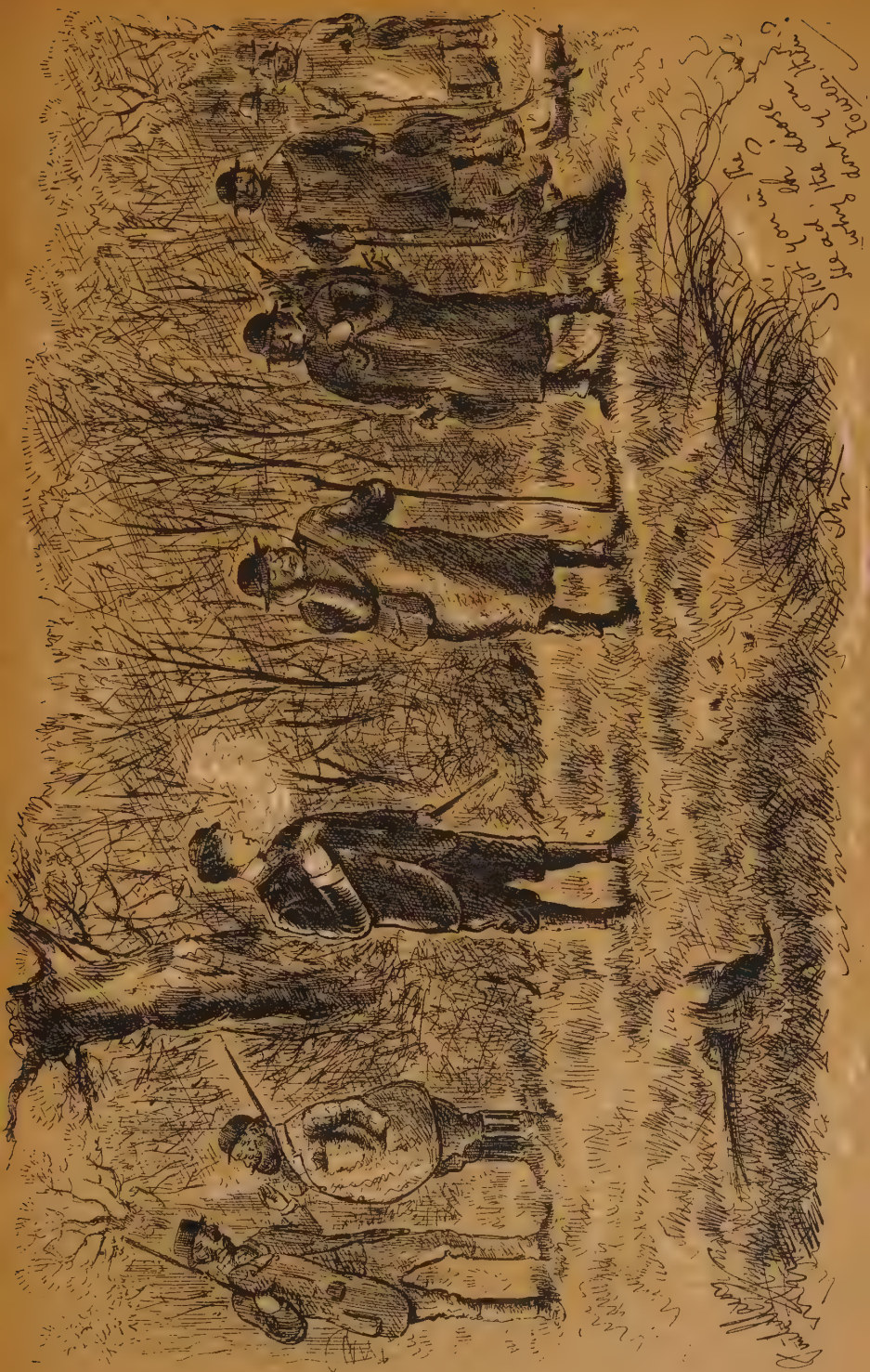
'Changed your name?' I cried. 'Good heavens, Nell! what *do* you mean? You don't mean to tell me you've gone and made a clandestine marriage, or anything of that sort?'

'Oh, Jack! don't be so angry,' she said, imploringly, pouting her rosy little lips as if she were going to cry, 'I—I—I'm *so* sorry.'

And then her suppressed laughter rang out as merrily as a ring of bells, and in her blue eyes I saw an arch, mischievous light, as she came and put her arm round my neck, and nestled her curly little head against mine, answering,—

'Oh, you dear, silly old fellow! I've only changed my name to Tom Harding, so that darling old Wexton shouldn't be beaten for the want of a little pluck. But you mustn't say a word about it to any one, for Dennis and his wife are the only people in the world who know the real name of the 'last man in!'





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Wm. L. G. W.






# FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

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## A SMITTLE PLACE FOR A WOODCOCK.

By FINCH MASON.

F there are two things in this world my friend Podger—John Podger, Esq., J.P., Poppyfield Park, Buttercupshire, patron of two livings, &c. &c.; heir apparent his son, Augustus Plantagenet, born 18—, as you'll find him described in Burke's *Landed Gentry*—if you choose, that is to say, to take the trouble to look—cares for more than any other they are, respectively, shooting and his dinner. In saying which I do not for one moment intend to insinuate that Podger, by giving a good deal of his mind to the two amusements I have named, does so to the detriment of his duties as a family man and a large landed proprietor.

On the contrary. I know him, from my own personal knowledge, to be one of the best and kindest of husbands and parents; and from hearsay I should imagine him to be all that is good in the respective characters of landlord, neighbour, and magistrate. In the first he is generous to a fault; in the second, such a cheery, hospitable bird as Podger, could hardly fail to be popular; and in the third, fairness itself. Podger shows no mercy, as a rule, to your professional poacher, whom he looks upon—and rightly, too—as at the best of times but a loafing, drunken scamp, too lazy to work, and no better, indeed, than a common thief.

On the other hand, should Henery Brown, with a wife and seven brats to keep on fourteen shillings a-week, be brought up before him charged with 'setting of a snare' in one of the hare runs of the hedge he is mending, the chances are that all the punishment Henery Brown receives is a good talking to from the Squire, followed by being sent about his business, *plus* a horn or two of beer in the servants' hall, and a couple of fat rabbits to take home to the family pot.

Podger is short, he is also fat—in figure, indeed, like unto a beer-barrel. One can hardly imagine, if you come to think of it, anybody of the name of Podger being a thin person. It is, somehow or another, a plump-sounding name ; and, as I have already said, his two special weaknesses are shooting and the noble science of gastronomy. Hunting, it is true, he goes in for (such a jolly cock-robin as he looks in a red coat you never set eyes on), but only in a desultory sort of way. Except when the hounds have a day in the woodland part of the country, when they perhaps hang about in covert all day, you don't, as a rule, see anything of Podger after they have found.

On these forest days Podger is quite happy ; he eats an enormous quantity of sandwiches ; he drinks no end of sherry, not only out of his own flask but out of those of his friends ; he smokes innumerable cigars ; he hears and tells in his turn no end of good stories ; he chaffs and laughs, and gallops about ; and, lastly, about three o'clock slopes off home with precisely what he came out for—*such* an appetite for dinner as never was.

Having now, to the best of my ability, given a pen-and-ink portrait of the man himself, I will now endeavour to describe a memorable day's shooting I had only last winter in his company.

It was in the month of December, and, for a wonder, Podger's hospitable domicile was destitute of guests, with the exception of a young brother of his wife's and myself ; the reason being, that Mrs. Podger had lately presented her doting lord with an addition to his family. The fifth little Podger had just made his first appearance on any stage, and in consequence the family mansion had to be kept quiet. Now, hatred and malice, as a rule, were articles never known to enter the Podger breast ; but I am afraid I must say at once, that my old friend detested young Larkins, his volatile brother-in-law, from the bottom of his heart. He didn't like his dress, which was brilliant in the extreme ; he didn't like his manners, which were of the most free-and-easy description ; he didn't like his habits—he used to lie in bed all the morning and drink brandy and soda, and steadily declined at any price to go to church on Sunday ; he was always feeling jumpy, or else chippy ; he could and did beat Podger at billiards, at which game his plump brother-in-law fancied himself not a little ; he had during his stay broken down Podger's best hunter, and lamed another with hounds (he rode with a loose rein, and in the most reckless fashion) ; and lastly, couldn't

shoot a bit, though sundry beaters, who had been peppered by him at odd times, stoutly averred to the contrary.

‘What’s the matter with *you*?’ inquired he airily, as a rustic emerged at the end of a beat one day (we were beating the Home Wood), holding his head in his hand and bellowing like a young bull.

‘What’s the matter with *you*?’ repeated he.

‘Oh, Zur, you’ve shot me in the ’ed, you ’ave!’ sobbed the frightened bumpkin.

‘Shot you in the head, eh? Why the doose don’t you “tower,” then?’ pleasantly replied Larkins, as he turned away and lit a cigarette.

‘I say, old feller,’ inquired Podger one fine, frosty morning, about a week after my arrival, as we two sat all by ourselves at breakfast (‘the Cub,’ as Podger called his brother-in-law, was still in bed), ‘I say, old feller, are you fond of woodcocks?’

‘Woodcocks!’ I responded with enthusiasm. ‘Why, next to a wild duck, I don’t know any bird that gives me so much pleasure to bring down as a woodcock.’

‘Ah, yes, but I don’t mean quite what you mean,’ said Podger, as he helped himself to some more ‘kedgeree.’ ‘When I asked you if you liked woodcocks I meant, do you like ’em to eat?—not to shoot.’

‘Oh, I see,’ replied I. ‘Oh, yes, I like a woodcock very much. Capital bird, a woodcock.’

‘Glad you do,’ said my fat friend. ‘So do I, hugely.’ (Whenever Podger liked anything more than ordinarily it was always, ‘hugely.’) ‘Perfectly sublime the trail of a fresh woodcock on toast—ain’t it?’

‘I’ll tell you what I thought of doing to-day. Woodcocks, as you know, are scarce in these parts; but I’ve got one little covert that I call Cocked Hat Spinney, because it is in shape just like a three-cornered cocked hat, that invariably holds one or two. It has not been beaten this year, and I propose we go there this morning, you and I; and if, as I hope we shall light on a cock or two, we’ll send ’em home at once, so that we can have ’em for dinner at night. More than that, old chap,’ continued Podger, rubbing his hands, ‘I have arranged a little dinner a trifle different in style to that Bonbon sends up every night, that I think you’ll approve of. “The Cub,” I must tell you, dines at the cavalry mess at — to-night, so that we shall be all by ourselves, thank goodness! and enjoy it all the more,



I trust. He'll never dream either of getting up this cold morning (did you notice how screwed he was last night?), so that we shall have the shooting of the cocks all to ourselves—and the eating of 'em, too! Now for the *menu*—what do you think of it?' and Podger, having produced a note-book from his pocket, read out as follows:—'A few oysters, some *croûte-au-pot*, red mullet (the woodcock of the sea—eh?), a steak—plain grilled, of course—then the woodcocks—one a-piece—eh? After that a plain omelette soufflée, and then, to wind up, some macaroni au gratin, or cheese straws. And we'll drink Burgundy along with it. A very simple little dinner, but not a bad one in its way I flatter myself. You approve—eh? Very well; then I'll go and talk to Bonbon about it at once, and then we'll make a start with our guns as soon as you like. Goodness!' exclaimed Podger, as he left the room, 'I declare my mouth quite waters when I think of that trail on toast we shall have to-night!'

'Well,' said my host, half an hour later, 'I've arranged all about dinner with Bonbon, and am quite ready when you are.'

And I being also quite ready and eager for the fray, we made a start without further delay. The arrangement was, that we were to beat first of all the belt round the park, then one or two small coverts, and so work up to the Cocked Hat Spinney—the little covert before-mentioned—as being, what Podger's old keeper (a Westmoreland man) called 'The "smittlest plaâce" for a woodcock there was on the estate,' and which was to be the final beat before luncheon.

We were soon at work. It was a delightful morning for shooting. A sharp white frost made the air keen, but as we kept moving all the while, and the sun shone brightly, we did not feel the cold. The rabbits were out to a rabbit, and seemed to take quite a pleasure in being bowled over as they skipped away from their tussocks at their best pace. The pheasants, too, were plentiful, so that by the time that we had worked up to the smittle place for the cocks we had made quite an imposing bag.

Podger was in the act of telling me where to place myself with a view to getting a shot at a cock, if there was one, he adjuring me at the same time in the solemnest tones on no account to miss him or he'd never speak to me again, when a loud view-halloo behind us startled me, made Podger's pet retriever Bess prick up her ears, and Podger himself to give

utterance to a little word, the first letter of which is a great big D.

'Hang me, if it isn't that cub of a brother-in-law of mine!' he exclaimed, as a figure attired in a Tweed suit of a particularly loud pattern, composed apparently of all the colours of the rainbow, now approached us. 'Now that's *too* bad,' he went on, stamping his foot with vexation. 'I never dreamt of the beggar turning up—made sure, indeed, that he would have lain in bed till the afternoon, as usual, reading French novels, or I'd have beat the little wood first. Cursed annoying, ain't it? However,' added he with a sigh, as 'the Cub' approached, 'we must make the best of it I suppose now he *is* come.'

'Well, my gay sportsmen, you didn't think yours truly would turn up, I guess,' was this volatile youth's greeting, as, cigar in mouth as usual, he joined us. '*You* didn't, at all events, old boy,' said he, addressing himself to his brother-in-law, giving him at the same time such a hearty slap on the back as nearly knocked the breath out of his body.

'You be d——d!' growled that long-suffering gentleman. 'I wish to goodness you'd say what your plans are for the day in future, and then we should know what to do. Meanwhile, as you *are* here, you'd better get over that fence as quickly as you can, and stand in the field, as near the middle of the covert as possible.'

'All right, old chappie,' answered 'the Cub,' who, to do him justice, was always in what he called 'a heavenly temper.' 'I only hope none of the cocks will come my way, for I feel precious jumpy this morning, I can tell you. Sure to miss 'em if they do. Better have somebody handy to wipe my eye. Only came out, don't-cher-know, for some fresh air, and get myself a bit fit for to-night.'

'Oh, you needn't trouble yourself; I don't suppose the woodcocks will come your way,' returned Podger with a sneer; 'at least they never do. I fervently trust they won't,' said he in a whisper to me; 'for, as he says, he's sure to miss 'em if they do. However, I don't think they will. As I have just said they never, as a rule, fly to that side. And now, old fellow, you stand at this corner; they invariably come over just here if there are any in the covert; and I'll go up to the top end with the beaters, and take the outside, opposite to "the Cub," in line with the beaters. Good-bye! Shoot hard, mind, and,' wound up Podger with a smack of his lips, 'remember the trail on toast.'

Five minutes afterwards, sounds of voices in the distance made one aware that the fun had begun. I cocked my gun and stood at attention. Hardly had the beaters begun to tap their sticks before the cry of '*Mark! Woodcock!*' rings out clearly on the frosty air. Something is flying towards me—it's a hen pheasant, and a lovely shot; but I let it pass, and I was sorry I did, for two seconds later a double shot on the Cub's side announces that the cock has favoured him with a visit. Twice more in ten minutes did the same magic cry ring out, and twice more was it answered by a double shot in the direction of Podger's erratic relation.

\* \* \* \*

It was too true. There were three woodcocks in the Cocked Hat Spinney that morning, and they had one and all, in the most perverse manner possible, flown out over the brainless head of "the Cub," who, needless to say, had handsomely missed the lot.

'Told you so, Podgy, old boy!' coolly remarked that misguided young man to his now indignant brother-in-law, as we joined forces. 'Told you I should miss 'em if they came my way. Felt too chippy to shoot this morning; couldn't hit a haystack much less a woodcock. And I say, young shaver' (addressing himself to the boy with his cartridges), 'put your hand in that 'ere bag of mine, and you'll find a flask;' and (turning to me) 'it's full of Cuwaçoa and bwandy, old chappie. Let you and I liquor up and celebrate the event.'

## SPORTING ADVENTURES.

*By 'SYKO' (A BULL TERRIER).*



ESTERDAY was Christmas Day. I like Christmas Day. I had a dinner—oh, such a feed! or rather, I was at it all day long. O dear! O dear! If only we could have Christmas Day every day! My master had a good dinner, too; and he had more than that—he had too much champ—— Oh, oh, my poor ribs!

'MR. EDITOR,—Although a perfect stranger to you, I must ask you to excuse my writing you a few lines. It is bad enough to be the unfortunate owner of a dog that writes, but when the wretch takes to telling deliberate

untruths, and trying to take away what little character I may have, I can stand it no longer. I have just come in and found my amiable dog, Syko, seated in my pet chair and writing to you, by means of one of his claws, which he dips in the ink. I would let this pass, but when I came to look at what he was writing I found he was boasting about the succession of Gargantuan meals which he made yesterday; and, not content therewith, was insinuating that I, his master, was drunk on that date. It is needless to say that this is totally untrue. The real fact is, that Syko gorged himself to such a fearful extent that he was horribly sick; for which I licked him, and he apparently mistook my righteous wrath for the influence of alcohol. I have just administered another correction, to teach him to tell the truth another time; and I trust that, should he in future send any more such libels to you, you will kindly communicate with me on the subject. Once more apologising for this intrusion upon you, I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

‘SYKO’S MASTER.’

He has gone, and I’m glad of it. I shan’t forget that crack on my ribs in a hurry. I am a wretched, miserable dog. I don’t think I will ever write any more. On second thoughts, though, I will, if it is only to show my master what I can do. I was ill yesterday, I know; but so would any dog be that had eaten seventeen oyster patties, with nasty black things inside them, and then followed it up with all the jelly of a large galantine. If it had not been for that nasty housemaid I should never have been found out. I hate that girl! I hate every one to-day! I think it’s liver. My master is annoyed with his tailor, too, and I’m glad of it. Now he’s out of the way I’ll tell you all about it; only, please, don’t let him know I’ve told you. He doesn’t often hit me, but when he does it’s like a horse kicking. I heard him the other day telling a friend that he had paid his tailor for the first time for six years. The bill was a ‘corker,’ he said; ‘however, I can get tick now for a long time to come.’ Well, he got a letter this morning from the tailor in question, thanking him for his cheque, and informing him that for the future their business was ‘to be carried on on the ready-money principle.’ This was aggravating, was it not? At any other time I would sympathise with him, although I hardly know how annoying tailors really are, for my own furnishes me with a capital new suit of clothes every spring and every winter, and never sends in his bill at all. Ah, ha! there’s something after all in being a dog—four legs and a tail against two legs and no tail! Five to two on the dog, isn’t it? Five to two I lay, anyhow, bar none!



Talking of laying, though, reminds me of a way I once saw my master pull off longer odds than five to two by a good bit ; in fact, as you will see for yourselves when I've told you my story, it was at one time pretty nearly the 'Theodore' odds of a thousand to a walking-stick.

It is needless to say the occasion was a race ; it was, in fact, the big steeplechase of the best meeting in Ireland, and I dare say you know its name, and very probably some of you saw the whole thing.

If I remember rightly there were eleven starters, one a hot favourite, and another running him close in the betting, and my master's mount was the outsider of the party. I had backed him, however, and planked down nearly all my most savoury bones on the event ; not because I knew anything, but because I don't think it looks well for a dog of my position to back anything outside the home stable, and because, if I lost, I used generally to fight the winner, give him a rattling good hiding, and worry him till he gave me back my bones. Rather a good plan, I flatter myself.

However, *revenons à nos moutons*. The course was the most severe in Ireland, and in those days the water-jump was a regular rum 'um, and by no means

'That cocktail imposture, the steeplechase brook,'

but twenty-four feet of water, square and fair, and deep into the bargain, and the ground *rose* to it for the last hundred yards. How do you like the sound of that ? Some of you gentlemen riders who shudder at the mention of an open ditch, can't you imagine them catching their toes in the ground nearly every stride of that infernal rising ground, just when you wanted every bit of steam you could put on ? Ah, it was a nasty one that ! Two horses had broken their backs at it that year, and one 'professional' and one 'gentleman' had jumped that 'yawner' of which, though we all know the take-off, none of us can tell what is on the landing side, but we may be quite certain that if we will only 'run straight' through life we shall land safe enough when our turn comes to take that last big place. Dear me, what a prosy old dog I am getting ! I dare say you will all vote me a bore, so I'll stick to my text in future, and return to my account of the race at present.

I have told you there were eleven starters for the nice little water-jump mentioned above, and four miles and a half of

'country' to negotiate. I need hardly say that, considering what a big 'event' it was, and that all the horses were Irish, there were no slovenly jumpers among them; and all the men on their backs meant business, and knew how to do it. Well, the usual preliminaries were got through, and they were soon started on their journey to as level a start as ever you need wish to see. My master's mount was a great, leathering, striding, hard-mouthed animal, and when once he had settled down to his work it was hopeless trying to get a pull at him: the only thing to be done was to sit on his back and keep him as steady as you could. Off they went, the pace being about as hot as they could make it. Directly the flag fell I ran across to the water, for I had an idea something would happen there, and in a moment after they came sweeping round the bend, and one after the other set themselves straight for it; my master was lying second, but they were all close together. Down they came to the jump with a rush like a whirlwind. Captain L. was on the leading horse, about the finest mouthed and sweetest 'lepper' that ever looked through a bridle. Over he swung, just a little scramble on the far side, and the mare was in her stride again directly; but just as he landed, my master's great, tearing crock, who had tripped three times coming up the rising ground, crashed over, just cleared the brook, and fell all of a heap on his side, pinning my master under him. There he lay, one leg under the horse, and the other still over the saddle. Some of the other horses came close, but one swung over, and looked like landing right on the top of him; he had his wits about him though, and just at the critical moment, swung back the leg that was still over the saddle, and, impossible as it may seem—I can vouch for the truth of it, for I saw it—the horse actually went on and off the saddle just where his leg had been the second before. His horse then rolled over, fortunately the right way, and in another minute he was up and after them as if nothing had happened. I can see him now steadying the great brute, and sitting as still in the saddle as if he had been glued to it. On they went, and by the time they came to the water the second time he was nearly on terms with them. There was no mistake about it this time; I never saw such a terrific jump as the great horse made of it: he literally whisked through the air like a cannon-ball, and landed a clear half-length to the good. Forward they went, the big horse going great guns, but still about two lengths behind. I rushed across again to see the finish, and got

there just in time to see my master take the last fence into the straight right up to the leader's girths. I saw him take one more long, strong, steadier at his horse, which pulled him back just behind the leader. Thud, thud, thud, they came at a thundering pace: a hundred yards from home he was level, sitting as still as possible. On they came. Captain L. lifted up his whip and put in one, two; his horse answered gamely, and left my master at his girths: still he never moved. The winning-post was nearly reached, there were only three or four more strides to go, when, quick as lightning, my master put in one, two, three whacks—regular hot ones; his legs seemed to fasten on to his horse's flanks, three of the most extraordinary strides I ever saw a horse give, and the big race was won by a short head, amid a scene of uproarious excitement; the ring yelling themselves hoarse with delight at seeing the favourite beaten, and all good sportsmen cheering like mad at the plucky race and fine finish; and then, when 'All right!' was passed round, the excitable Irish crowd insisted on a preliminary canter by passing the stand with my master on a couple of brawny shoulders. They were jolly times, they were, but, alas! my master has eaten too many Christmas dinners and put on too much beef since then, ever to do that trick again. Ah, well! I was a proud dog that day; I fought three fights and won them all, and I carried my tail so erect and stiff that I had cramp in it for days afterwards.

Talking of being a proud dog though, reminds me of a day on which I was prouder still, and on account of a feat of my own.

I had gone with my master on a fishing-expedition into Lower Brittany. If ever there was a country made for wild sport, it is to be found in that part of the world. There are streams which glide through the most lovely scenery, whose waters are as clear as crystal, and which literally swarm with trout. Rivers, the very sight of which sets a fisherman's heart leaping with excitement, and whose banks abound with those traces so dear to the eye of the experienced otter-hunter. Forests there are, too, which stretch in an unbroken extent for leagues, the home of the mighty boar, of the antlered monarch of the forest, and of the obscure but odoriferous badger.

The badger! ha! even as I write the word, up goes my tail, all my hackles instinctively bristle, and my chops become moist. Don't I remember every minute of that day, what a fight it was! I have fought it over and over again in my dreams, and now I must try and do it again *pro bono publico*.

We had been fishing for two or three days, and had had capital sport, when the wind suddenly veered round to the north-east, the weather became cold and piercing to a degree, and the big trout took refuge in their warmest and snugest holes, and utterly refused to be tempted by the most seductive flies. My master was thinking of returning home, when Fortune threw him in the way of a keen and accomplished French gentleman, who was down in the same part of the world, with a splendid pack of French *battants*, which, I may remark, are something like an English fox-hound, only bigger, heavier, more throaty, and with long hanging ears. They are, of course, much slower than our hounds, but their noses are first rate; they throw a tremendous peal of rich, full music, which is of the greatest service in the vast forests in which they hunt; and they are very patient and determined, they will stick to a cold scent all day long, with as much eagerness as they would sweep along to a regular scorcher. Besides this pack of *battants*, my master's new acquaintance had with him a pack of some four or five couple of dogs, very much resembling myself but considerably smaller, and showing a good deal more 'bull' in their heads; these he said, were his badger-dogs, and it was agreed that the next day he would show my master how they worked.

The following morning, accordingly, we started off for the Forêt de L——c, where badgers were reported to be numerous, and *en route* I made the acquaintance of several of the badger-dogs. I noticed that nearly all of them bore terrible scars; great, long, ugly-looking marks they were too, but they did not look at all like any ordinary bites I had ever seen, and I was told that these were done by the badger's claws, which were, if possible, more to be dreaded than his teeth. Some of the accounts they gave me of their fights were simply grand, and I longed to be at it. I've read and heard a good deal about the cruelty of letting us fight badgers, and about cock-fighting, &c., but in my opinion it is all nonsense; the greatest treat you can give 'Me' is a real good fight, life isn't worth living without it; and if you men had only the honesty to say so, you too would confess that there's nothing like a good 'row.' However, here we were at the forest. We went further on, about a quarter of a mile, into a thick part of it, where the ground was full of great holes, in which one of my new acquaintances told me the badgers lived.

The badger-dogs were now coupled up, and handed over to



the care of the *piqueur*, or huntsman, who accompanied his master, while I was tied up to a tree with a piece of string produced from my master's pocket.

After a careful inspection of the earths, to ascertain which of them bore the freshest marks, a choice was made, and, with a courteous bow to my master, the French gentleman slipped a couple of the 'little white dogs,' who immediately rattled down the hole and disappeared from view; but though lost to sight they were still 'in evidence,' for they immediately set up what to an uneducated ear would have seemed an 'infernal din,' but which to me consisted of ejaculations of delight, rage, and triumph. The sounds receded further and further into the bowels of the earth. The Baron de B. lay down at full length on the ground, with his head actually down the earth. 'So ho! Gaillard! Là! mon enfant! Là! Ho! Là! Ho!' and in response to his encouragement the noise redoubled. I became frantic with excitement, and for the first time in my life felt envious of a dog smaller than myself. Suddenly came a sound like a far-off snore from a giant's nostrils, immediately followed by a yelp of pain from the plucky little Gaillard.

'Sacré bleu!' cried the Baron, with his head still down the hole. 'Là! Creusez là! Vite!' And immediately two sturdy peasants, who had accompanied us with their picks and shovels, set to work with a will, and soon opened out a great trench in the sandy soil, between the entrance of the earth and the spot from which the sound came. As the earth was shovelled away the sounds became plainer, and I could clearly hear the grunting of the badger and every word the plucky little dogs said about it. A few more vigorous 'digs,' and the end of the earth was nearly reached. Exasperated at the approach of daylight, Mr. Badger let fly with such terrible effect that the little badger-dogs were fairly driven off, and came reeling out panting for breath, covered with blood, and gashed and seamed in every direction!

'It must be a monster!' said the Baron. 'He is too much for my dogs, Monsieur! But your dog there is bigger and stronger: is he any good?'

Now I had never seen a badger, and my master knew it. However, he knew me too; so, untying the string which held me, he patted my head and said, 'Now then, old man, show this foreign gentleman what an English dog can do.'

I didn't want much encouragement, I can tell you. Straight

at the hole I went. It was rather small for me, but I scrambled in, and the first thing that greeted me was a stink—a real strong stink, a cross between a litter of cubs, a polecat, and a rotten egg!

Strange to say, this horrid smell, instead of making me sick, mounted to my brain with all the fire and vigour of 'Old Scotch,' and added to my longing for the combat. My wish was soon to be gratified, for, as soon as my eyes became accustomed to the obscurity, I saw just in front of me a large, hairy body, apparently convulsed with superhuman efforts. This was the badger's 'stern,' and I accordingly laid hold of it. I had not counted on the thickness of the skin, however, and missing my hold, was immediately confronted by a long, lean, game-looking, evenly marked, black-and-white head, the owner of which promptly gave me a couple of slashing bites, which cut like razors. In I went, and got a hold right inside his mouth, the lower jaw of which I bit right through. He was not at the end of his resources, though, for he set to work with two powerful arms, armed with terrible claws nearly an inch long, and literally ploughed up my face and eyes to such an extent that I was compelled to let go to get a fresh hold. Directly I loosed him he bit me twice, as quick as lightning, right through the nose, and I was very nearly singing out with the pain; but I pulled myself together, went straight in again, and this time got him just by the back of the neck. It was my turn now, and accordingly I made my big teeth meet well in him, and then set to work to drag him out. It was a tough struggle, but inch by inch he gave way, and at last, getting my hind legs outside the 'earth,' I got a good purchase. One big heave and out he came; but all was not over, for as I pulled him out I slipped. The badger rolled over on his back, with me half on the top of him, when he brought up his hind legs and scored me right down the stomach with ten long bleeding gashes. Furious at this I again let go my hold, and before he had time for further mischief seized him by the throat, and with a worry and a couple of scrunches sent him to join his forefathers.

'Monsieur,' said the Baron, with a bow to my master, 'vous avez un bien brave chien.'

'Tous les chiens anglais sont aussi braves,' replied my master, with a lift of his hat. I don't know whether he was telling the strict truth, but at all events it was a patriotic falsehood, if it was one, and as such I trust it may be forgiven him. Flasks were produced, an interchange of English or Scotch

whisky and French cognac took place; my wounds were washed in a neighbouring stream, and stiff and sore, but with tail erect, I headed the *cortége* on our homeward tramp, followed by my defunct adversary slung on a pole, and borne along by two sturdy peasants like a warrior going to his last resting-place.

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## THE FOX OF THE IVIED WALLS.

By LARKY GRIGG.

**W**HEN 'the Marquis' first established the 'Big Rock Hounds' foxes were anything but plentiful in the extensive area over which he held venatic sway, and it was with feelings of intense mortification that the great sportsman had often to announce to his field: 'A blank day, gentlemen; no help for it; better luck another time.' When he first took the 'Big Rock' country there were scarcely a dozen foxes in it, but no pains or expense were spared to make the pack and country second to none, and after a few years a blank day was a thing unheard of and unknown.

Before such a gratifying change had been wrought in the country 'the Marquis' was one day, early in February, in the Slate Quarry, or Welsh Mountain end of his district, when, after several draws, the search for a member of the hen-stealing tribe proved ineffectual, and it was in no pleasant mood that his lordship and his world-renowned huntsman, 'Old Johnny,' accompanied by the remnant of a large field that met them at 'Curragawn Cross Roads' in the morning, were moving on pretty briskly along the road from Oldtown Wood to draw Cashtown as a last resource.

Old Johnny knew full well that Cashtown would take a lot of drawing, from its extent, and hence he was in a hurry to get there. When they were about half way, or a couple of miles from their destination, they saw a man—evidently of the working class from his dress, for he wore the old flannel waistcoat so peculiar to the Irish labourer—running from the direction of a huge old pile of dilapidated buildings which stood a few fields to the left of the road. When he came into the field next the road it was easy to see that something out of the common was up, as he yelled like a 'North American Indian' on the warpath, waving his old caubcen aloft until 'the Marquis,' who was

riding behind the hounds, ordered 'Old Johnny' to pull up 'to see what the countryman wanted.' The said countryman was no other than the celebrated Jem McDonogh, one of the greatest poachers and 'cleverest' fellows for miles round. He evidently knew 'the Marquis' well, as he addressed him at once thus :

'Had ye a good day, my lord? Did ye ketch the fox?'—the latter a query put by the yokels in Ireland to those returning from hunting.

'We caught all we met,' was 'the Marquis's' sharp reply.

'Well, perhaps ye would like to ketch another fellow,' was McDonogh's equally tart rejoinder.

'That depends on circumstances,' replied 'the Marquis,' concluding at once that the fellow had a bagman—which he would then of a certainty have hunted. 'Why, have you got one; or do you know where there's one?' adding, almost inaudibly, 'he was never more wanted.'

'What would you be inclined to give me, now, my lord, if I brought you to where you'd get a fox?' said McDonogh.

'A sovereign, and another if he's a good one,' answered 'the Marquis.'

'This way then, my lord,' said McDonogh, opening up a gate leading into an old avenue, and, while the field *are* proceeding along it, I may describe the place and its surroundings.

It was called Woodlands, and had been, in former times, the residence of a prominent county family, but, the entire place having been destroyed by fire mayhap a whole century previously, and never having been rebuilt, the whole ruins became covered over with ivy, and now assumed a singularly weird and dismal appearance : its only inhabitant was McDonogh himself who had been for many years caretaker for the owner. There was a walled-in garden of about two acres in extent which was one of McDonogh's appurtenances, and whose walls were all enveloped in a twining mass of ivy. Thither McDonogh conducted 'the Marquis,' and about a dozen of the keenest spirits who still held on in the hope of sport. Woodlands itself was situated at the foot of the Cashtown Hills, or at the very confines of what was generally known as the valley of the Certain, which was a broad expanse or plain taking its name from the Certain river which flowed along at the southern end of the valley, and which was distant from Woodlands about six miles. The country was as level as a bowling-green, but very heavily fenced. When they had reached the ruins, McDonogh said :



'Now, my lord, I have the fox safe and sound, though, if you were to look for him until Tibbs' eve (which comes neither before nor after Christmas), you would not find him. He mostly makes for the Cashtown Hills, but we will draw on him from this side, and, if ye remain where ye are, I will soon have him going.'

'A bagman, on my oath!' thundered out Billy Mulcahy.

Billy was a first-flight man in those days, and would have gone on drawing for a fox for a week.

'Let him be,' shouted out some of the others; 'anything is preferable to a blank day—fearing that 'the Marquis' would not hunt him if he turned out to be a 'bagman.'

Not heeding their gammon McDonogh called to a little white terrier he had, and which never left his heels since he first appeared on the scene, 'Eleu in Toper! eleu in Toper!' The terrier evidently knew his business, as he jumped into an aperture in the garden wall at the corner where the field were stationed, and not thirty yards from where Old Johnny was standing with the hounds. At the same time McDonogh hurried through the garden, clambered on to the off corner of the wall, from which he had a view of the whole valley underneath.

Many moments had not elapsed before a big, lean, lanky fox as grey as a badger emerged from the wall. But McDonogh was no fool, so he let him get half way down the big grass field of about thirty acres before he ran up to 'the Marquis,' hat in hand, exclaiming, 'There he goes, now, my lord! let's have the sovereign, and clap on the hounds!'

'Yes, there he goes, sure enough, and there's your sovereign,' replied 'the Marquis.'

'Come on, Johnny! toot—toot—toot—gone—away—away—away!' went forth from a dozen throats, for all the field saw him then, and in another instant were going down the field mail-train pace, for the moment hounds touched the line they went like blazes.

The afternoon was pretty far advanced, and a warm sun, which made the day almost summerlike, had given way to a fresh breeze from the south'ard, and against this breeze the 'lanky one' kept his head without diverging to the right or left, until he had placed a good distance between himself and the hills. As a matter of fact he never turned until he got to a railway about five miles in a bee line from the starting-point, and about one mile from the Certain river. The 'ivy-man' turned

along the railway, and there hounds checked for the first time, but it was only for about a minute. When he forsook the metals he struck out boldly for the river, and when within a couple of fields of it he was viewed close in front, and dead-beat, with the hounds running hackles up for blood ; but, when the river-bank was reached, all traces of him had disappeared. Old Johnny made a cast to the right and another to the left, but it was no go. Seven miles was the distance, and thirty-eight minutes the time. Some of the field suggested that he had taken to the water and swam across, while others averred that if he entered the water at all that he would of a certainty be drowned, as he would stiffen at once.

This 'splitter' took place on a Friday, and, as next day was a non-hunting one with 'the Marquis,' McDonogh put in an appearance in 'Big Rock' courtyard, and the moment he set eyes on 'the Marquis' he demanded the extra sovereign for his fox—as he called him—being a good one. His lordship at once handed him, not one, but two, and elicited from him that the fox had taken up his quarters permanently in the old ruins for years previous, and expressed a hope that it would not be long again until his lordship would come to have another gallop out of him. Nor was it, for, when next in that side of his country again, he went to Woodlands and found 'Master ivy walls' at home, and went himself to the corner of the wall to see him go forth, and again he led them over the same line to the river-bank, and there disappeared as if by magic. The journey was not got over in such 'double-quick' time as on the former day, but it was a good gallop, and McDonogh got his three sovs. The Woodlands fox then began to be talked about by the members of the 'Big Rock Hunt,' and the next time 'the Marquis' had a fixture in the locality all the regular *habitués* of the hunt, and a great many from the neighbouring Wilfort and Confederation packs, came up to time, and the performance of the two previous days was repeated. 'Master ivy-walls' being at home, and beating them at the bank of the river at the very same spot and in the same fashion, hounds carried the line to the river's brink, but then threw up in most unaccountable fashion. But 'the Marquis' resolved on doing his utmost to solve the mystery, and succeeded, as the sequel will show.

In those days there was no special hunting correspondent on the staff of any paper, sporting or political, but the wonderful performances of McDonogh's fox had crept into print, and hence,

when it was announced that 'Ballinacluna cross-roads,' to finish the season, was to be the tryst, all the world and their wives turned out to see this wonderful fox and assist at his capture. The sight at the cross-roads was such as the locals had never seen before. The cavalry division numbered fully five hundred strong, the infantry brigade some two or three thousand, and as for the artillery—as those hunting on wheels have been not inaptly called—they went beyond counting. There was only one road besides the railway in the whole line to be crossed, and there a whole crowd had taken up positions, but 'the Marquis' had four men with horses posted there to keep the coast clear for fully half a mile at the point where 'Mister ivy-walls' used to pass, and two reliable men were placed on the bank of the river where Charlie was wont to give them the slip.

'The Marquis' was proverbial as a strict disciplinarian in the field, and immense though the muster was, they were kept in strict order. Toper was a long time in the ivy before the fox broke, and so elated was McDonogh, who had serious misgivings as to his being at home, that Charlie was not gone a dozen yards when he raised his hat—he had got a new one, instead of the caubeen, on the strength of 'Ivy-walls' earnings—and shouted out in stentorian tones, 'He's gone away, me Lord—there he is!—Yoick!—Yoick!—hurrah! Cetch him now if ye can.'

The hounds were laid on, but 'the Marquis' stood on the gate and would not let one pass until hounds had picked up the line. Fast as hounds went—they did not actually race—the phalanx bore down on them, and check after check was the result of over-riding, which would not have occurred but for 'the Marquis' coming to grief early in the fray and his horse getting loose. He never got on terms afterwards until they had checked finally on the bank of the river, but the two look-out men were true to their task, and saw 'Mister ivy-walls' come on to the bank of the river, along which, at that side, ran a towing-path, which raised it considerably above the river. He slipped down the towing-path into the river, which was shallow near the bank, waded along for about fifty yards, to a huge brake of briars, entered the brake, which was almost concealed from view over-head, and there lay in safety, where he was left undisturbed with the two men to keep watch to see that no one harmed him in his bower of safety.

'The Marquis' resolved to have one bye-day at Ballinacluna cross-roads, and sent word over-night to about a score of the keenest men, the writer being of the number. It was drizzling

rain, with a slight southerly breeze, when we set out for Woodlands.

Arrived there, his Lordship's first query to McDonogh was, 'Have you got your fox at home.'

'I think so, my Lord,' replied McDonogh.

'Well, then, let us have him out,' said 'the Marquis,' saying at the same time to the huntsman, 'Johnny, bring up the hounds to the gate, and I shall go down to the angle to see the game old beggar make his exit.'

He broke just at his Lordship's nose, so to speak, for he could lay the thong of his hunting crop on him.

Hounds were laid on in a trice, and it was regular coursing for about half a mile, at the end of which 'Charlie ivy-walls' broke into view. At the second fence—a big double, as was the first one also—two came down, 'yours truly' being one of the twain, and before two more fences had been negotiated another of our small, but determined, band had measured his length on the sward, but, nothing daunted, all three went on toiling hopelessly in the rear. We all knew the road as well as the fox, who did not diverge a field to the right or left from his original line.

When the Kilnaracy road was being crossed—which was about half way—seven of the original fifteen had cried *peccavi*, but the other eight were with the hounds, who were running as hard as ever they could foot it. After crossing the road a board of works drain cropped up, which was fully sixteen feet from bank to bank, and held about four feet of water. Not one of the eight attempted to look for a crossing, but crammed their horses at it like smoke; but the previous exertions told its tale on the nags, for two of them rolled back into the canal, and the two unlucky wights were trying to extricate themselves and their horses when we, who comprised the second division, came on the scene. They reminded me very forcibly of a plate I once saw in an old sporting magazine entitled 'Getting out of a difficulty.'

About a mile beyond the canal this great fox—for the first time while being hunted—began to twist and turn, a sure indication that he was sinking fast, and so it proved, as he was soon viewed in front dead beaten. But he struggled bravely to reach his river home. The old adage that 'long as the fox goes he is caught at last' was exemplified, as after a few fields hounds got a view, and, being fast closing on him, the leaders jumped into a large grassfield not a hundred yards in his wake, and along the whole



length of it, it was real coursing, but the 'Big Rock gentlemen' were for once more than a match for this heroic member of the fox family, as before the next fence was reached he was rolled clean over, with only 'the Marquis,' Old Johnny, and two others to witness the death scene. He was within a mile of his goal, but the pace was too good, and he could not do it. He died gallantly, at all events, like the great fox that he undoubtedly was. Six miles was the distance, and twenty-six minutes the time.

When I got to them 'the Marquis' had the fox on his saddle-bow, and he was already as stiff as a poker—a fine greyhound fox, and as grey as a badger. 'The Marquis' was delighted—so much so that he gave McDonogh a ten-pound note and 'a fiver' to give the Cashtown boys a drink of beer, and sure enough in the village of Cashtown on the Saturday night following the health of 'the Marquis' and success to fox-hunting was drank with three times three, and a grand dinner in the spacious 'riding-house' at Big Rock, which 'the Marquis' had erected to have his horses exercised in during frost or on bad mornings, was given to the farmers, whose ground was run over with their wives and families. These amenities, with an indescribable charm of manner and great affability, caused the popular sportsman to be hailed with delight wherever he appeared, and the people of the locality would have readily opened their parlour doors to let him pass through if necessary. Many good foxes fell to 'the Marquis's' lot to hunt during his mastership of the Big Rock Hounds, but he never dropped across a better nor a straighter customer than 'THE FOX OF THE IIVIED WALLS.'

## AN OLD CHANNEL MATCH.

*By 'ROCKWOOD.'*



COME! a toast from the Commodore. Fill your glasses, gentlemen. The Commodore's going to give us a toast!

It was in the cabin of the *Highland Mary*, the largest and finest yacht of the Royal Northern Yacht Club, on the occasion of the closing cruise, about sixty years ago. The fleet had all day been beating down from Rothesay to Brodick, in the Island of Arran. Anchor lights had been hung

of the quick  
pods.





up on the forestay, and lamps trimmed in cabins and forecastles. The West Indian rum, for which Glasgow was then famous, had been placed on the table, and Commodore Campbell had invited on board the *Highland Mary* a number of old worthies, who, if not yachtsmen in a modern sense, were good seamen, inasmuch as some of them were shipowners who had served before the mast, and earned their certificates; some who had fought under Howe and Nelson, some who could relate yarns of the Chesapeake and the Shannon, and some who had sailed in Henry Bell's little steamer *Comet*, the precursor of the Transatlantic liner of modern days.

'Are you ready, gentlemen?' said the Commodore, as he filled his glass with an old-fashioned toddy-ladle.

'All ready!' was the response.

'Then, gentlemen—

"Here's to a strong gale  
And a stout sail;  
A staunch ship,  
And a pleasant trip;  
A plucky crew,  
And a lass that's true;"

and may the best boat win to-morrow's race.'

'Hear, hear!' was the general call. 'May the best boat win!'

'And what's the course to be, Commodore?'

'Round Ailsa Craig and then back to Largs. We dine, if the breeze holds good, in the "White Hart" at the close of the cruise. And now, as the rum is good, though I say it myself, let us enjoy ourselves. There will be plenty of deck-wash flying to-morrow, if I'm not mistaken, to cure a head-ache. We start at nine sharp, wind or no wind, breakfast or no breakfast; and you know where we're to meet at night. The prize is a Silver Punch-jug, and I hope we'll be able to drink the winner's health from it in Largs by this time to-morrow night. If we have a breeze we'll not be long in weathering the Craig of Ailsa.'

'Don't you call the start an early one?' shouted old Mr. Hunter of Hafton.

'Not a bit, Hafton. Who wants to lie snoozing in his berth in Brodick Bay when there's a fresh breeze blowing? No, no; let's start with the daylight, and then we'll have all the more time to mix our punch in the "White Hart." So now, mind, gentlemen all—you'd better write it down so long as you're



sober—we sail round Ailsa Craig any hand you like, port or starboard, and we finish off Largs Pier, outside the Cumbrae Islands, or inside if you like, though Hafton here knows every ridge of the Fairlie Roads, and will steal a little bit on us there with that old hooker of his.'

'Yes, Commodore; and I mean to take that punch-jug of yours home at the close of the cruise. But I'll not bounce. At nine o'clock we start between your boat's mast and the flagstaff on Brodick Castle. So let's make merry, for it's not often we meet.'

While toast was given after toast, and song after song—the ballads being the famous ones of a past century, and all about French privateers, Johnny Crapauds, and British hearts of oak—the breeze was piping up fresh, and at midnight, when boats were lying at the gangway, waiting for the old blowhard owners, who were in no hurry to depart, quite half a gale was blowing. Every now and then gusts came sweeping down Glen Rosa, sending the spendrift flying in showers, and raising a nasty, choppy sea, which made the work of pulling off to the Commodore's ship very difficult. The hardy West Highland fishermen who composed the crews of the yachts of the Royal Northern Fleet in those days were used to severe weather, however; and as each believed that his vessel was an abler boat than that on which his rivals sailed, they were rather pleased than otherwise at the prospect of a dead thrash in the teeth of a gale and in the face of a heavy sea down to Ailsa Craig. It was in the early days when baggy sails were the fashion, when the cod's-head bow and the mackerel stern were the types of vessels by which every yachtsman stood, and when spinnakers, jib-topsails, and water-sails were undreamt of.

But the boats went fast—*very fast*, if you believe the old songs and stories. Fast as arrows from a bow, indeed—aye, fast as the wind itself; but then it was in the age of poetical bounce not practical science. Possibly the biggest of the fleet would not have been able to keep alongside of a modern three-tonner. But that does not matter: they were the fastest vessels of the age; and it has to be kept in mind that, when we had no Limited Mail-trains, stage-coaches literally 'flew' at twelve miles an hour.

After *doch an dhorris*, though it seems unseamanlike to have drunk a *stirrup* cup, one by one the old blowhards crept up the companion, and soon were rowed on board their respective vessels. Before turning in the skippers of course had to be informed of

the proposals for next day, and great was the rejoicing when it was found that old Commodore Campbell had given a punch-jug to be sailed for round Ailsa Craig, and that there would be five golden guineas divided amongst the captain and crew of the winning vessel.

‘Py Gresshius!’ said Duncan McNab, the captain of the *Pateycock*, as Mr. Hunter’s vessel was named, ‘it’s five puns I heff been wanting for many a long day, whateffer to puy a poat for the herrin’ fushin’, an’ if I do not win it to-morrow may I effer go to sea in a vessel! Ay, ay! five puns! five coot puns! Ay, ay, my poys! we must show them the way round Ailsa Craig, though the de’il’s ain pig pellowses be plowin! Five puns! Gresshius me! that’s six weeks’ waiges for five hours’ sailing!’

Next morning, when the sun rose high above the Dundonald Hills, away over on the Ayrshire side of the frith, there was still more than half a gale of wind blowing, and that from the south-west, the wind having backed a little during the night. Heavy showers every now and then came sweeping down from Ben Guniss and over the bold summit of Holy Island, while Goatfell at times shone out grandly in sunshine, only to be obscured again by heavy rain-clouds, the watery contents of which soon came tumbling in foam down the rough boulder-bottomed gorges. From the flagstaff of the old Castle of Brodick floated the Hamilton flag, for the Duke was there, with a large party from the south for the grouse-shooting; and the ducal yacht at moorings lay under the shadow of the woods beneath, the only one in which there were no signs of activity. Brodick Bay was then unmarked by any of the present handsome buildings; there was no ‘Douglas Hotel’ on the edge of the burn by the Corriegills side; and the little village, now the resort of numerous visitors in the coasting season, was as simple a little place as the clachan of Aberfoyle in the days of Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Rob Roy. Still the natives, as herring-fishers, took an interest in sailing, and one and all gathered down to the beach to see the gentlemen’s pleasure-boats. ‘It was one great pity, howeffer,’ they said, that the Duke would not start his new vessel, just for sake of Donald McInnes the skipper, ‘who was a Brodick man.’ ‘Ay, ay! but Donald would be the proud man would he not pe if he wass to win the great race and peat the Rosa men, and the Largs men, and the Gourrock men!’ Whilst they were sitting watching the fleet

get under way, Donald was in close conversation with the Duke on the Castle tower—a conversation that was finished up by the order of his Grace ‘To get the vessel under sail as smartly as possible, and at the same time to send a boat off to the Commodore to delay the start for a little in order to give the *Cadzow Queen* a fair chance.’

Little time did Donald lose in doing so ; and as he pulled past the new ducal cutter he shouted to them to ‘heave short and get under way at once, as they were going to race.’ Pulling under the lee of the *Highland Mary* he hailed Commodore Campbell, and conveyed the Duke’s request that he might delay the start for half an hour, as he wanted to try his new vessel against the crack vessels of the Clyde fleet. Only too glad to have such a smart vessel in his squadron, the Commodore told him to lose no time, and that he would delay the gun half an hour. Ere the skipper got back the *Cadzow Queen* had her anchor ‘awash,’ and twenty minutes afterwards she stood in shore, hauled her wind, and took on board the ducal party ; filled on the other tack, and tried her run alongside the *Pateycock*, which had on board Fife (the elder), her builder ; Morris the blacksmith, who had made all her ironwork, and who was equal to any two men at getting in a main-sheet, as well as a couple of able Fairlie carpenters. One there was, too, who was destined to make a great name in the world, though the sheets he chose to handle in after life were neither main-sheets or fore-sheets. But the breath of a love for yachting may have been instilled there, for he was none other than James Gordon Bennet the elder, the founder of the *New York Herald*, and father of the owner of the *Sappho*, *Dauntless*, *Namouna*, and many other famous vessels, and who was then the yachting correspondent at the Royal Northern Yacht Club’s annual cruises on the Clyde.

‘By the water-kelpies o’ the Gogo burn!’ said Hunter, alluding to a famous Largs rivulet, ‘but that boat can travel ! Where was she built, Fife ?’

‘Some fellow down about Poole turned her out, but dinna you be feared, Hafton, the *Pateycock* will be round Ailsa Craig long before her ; and though she may catch us in the run, we should be able to keep our own.’

‘I hope so,’ said Hafton, as he shoved his helm down and cried to the men to mind the head-sheets ; ‘but if I can beat her as easy as I’m certain of beating the rest, I would feel less anxious. And now, Bennet, my boy, watch for the gun.’





"both boats sprang off to a rare start"



R. Alexander

"Ready about"





'Ay, ay, Sir!' was the reply of the canny Banffshire man, who had been watching the Commodore's ship as well as he could through a telescope balanced on the railing, and had been forced to shift his seat when the vessel was put about. 'You must fill quick, and run down under her stern, Sir. I see them standing by the gun!'

They only gave one gun in those early days, when starts were not cut so fine as at present, and so the competing boats generally hung very close to the Commodore's ship. On port tack the *Pateycock* was run down under the stern of the *Highland Mary*; while Duncan McInnes came down the Castle side, and crossed her bows, the *Largs Lassie*, the *Flora Macdonald*, and the *Fullarton Fairy* hovering on the line, with sheets on board, afraid to go far away.

'Shall you stay or gybe, Sir?' said Bennet excitedly, the hot poker is in his hand.

'Stand by for a gybe! Now then, *gybe, gybe oh!*' sang out the steersman, as he shoved the helm across her. 'Get head-sheets in smartly, my men, *there!*'

As the boom swung over and sent her rail under, her bowsprit cocked up under the *Highland Mary's* nose; and at the same moment, close to leeward, the *Cadzow Queen*, with the Hamilton flag at her masthead, *stayed*, and filled on starboard tack.

'Mind your line, Bennet! the flagstaff and mast we go bye. Are we right yet, Sir?'

'Right you are! *There's the gun!*' was the response; and as the smoke drifted low on the water ahead both boats sprang off to a rare start with the less cleverly manœuvred vessels astern. Sheets were pinned in hard and firm, and the boats, which had each three reefs tied down in the mainsails, started on their long passage round Ailsa Craig. There was not much comfort to be got out of yachting vessels in those days in what might be classed as comparatively fine weather; but in smashing down through a heavy sea they were drier on deck, and that was about all the comfort the yachtsmen of those times cared for. Now-a-days cabins are drawing-rooms, and the Sybarite in serge does not care to sail in any craft which is not luxurious with sofas, pillows, antimacassars, and a piano which can be played at an angle of over forty-five degrees, or so long as the player can preserve his equilibrium.

A starboard tack both held well out channel, and then went about to port and fetched in under Holy Island, to escape the

heavy sea that was running up from the Mull of Galloway. As Fife, father of the present Fairlie builder, had predicted, the *Pateycock* was not to be beat in a turn to windward; yet she did not get far away from her opponent, and when she stood off from the Arran shore the Duke's yacht was met standing in on port tack much closer than Hafton had expected; the remainder of the fleet, which were making bad weather of it, being considerably astern. Out from Holy Island they experienced the full weight of the sea, and now the *Pateycock* began to jump away from her opponent, which, not liking the look of things, tacked quickly again for the Arran shore, and commenced to work down to Pladda by short boards off and on.

'It strikes me, Hafton,' said Fife, 'that we should na go far awa from such a clipper as this *Cadzow Queen*, mair especially seeing that the wind may western when the showers dry up.'

'I'll chance that, Fife,' was the reply, 'and take a long leg on the tack. I'm on for the Ardrossan shore, and then work down across the Lady Isle. If I'm no mistaken there's more likelihood of the wind southering than westering.'

'Ye're wrang,' was the reply; 'but a wilful man must have his way. An it were my boat I should keep close to the boat I wanted to beat, and that Poole cutter o' the Duke's will no travel slow, or I'm no judge of a boat's lines. If it come to reaching or running she'll travel far faster than this boat, though she'll no do it in a run.'

'I'll risk that,' was the curt answer. 'I mean to be away home for Largs with a free sheet ere she or the others have weathered Ailsa.'

With the big green seas which had been running hard all the way from the Isle of Man, smashing over her bows and spurting in jets half way up the mast and across the sails, which were bagged like balloons, the *Highland Mary*, carefully steered, held over to the Ayrshire coast, and went about to the southward of Saltcoats, having gone so close that the flag of the Montgomeries could be seen waving from the flagstaff on the tower of Eglinton Castle, just over the woods by the old cathedral town of Kilwinning. Going about, she held off across Troon on port tack to fetch well down to Ailsa Craig, which now and then could be seen looming through the haze far away to windward. With sheets flat in, they soon weathered the Lady Island, but found the Duke's cutter coming off from Pladda, at the southern point of Arran, on starboard tack, and threatening to cross their bows.

‘It’s just as I told you, Hafton,’ said Fife, rather down-hearted with the thought that a boat of his own building was to be defeated by a craft built in a southern port. ‘They have had a nice slant of westerly wind from off the Dippin shore.’

‘Never mind,’ was the reply; ‘she’ll not cross us far, if she cross us at all.’

But cross her the *Pateycock* did, and that well to windward, the spray lashing over her bluff bows, and catching in her bellying canvas as she jumped gaily over the big green and white crested waves, and went off heading in the direction of the Bay of Ayr. Hafton said nothing, but held on to his port tack till far across the wake of the Duke’s cutter, and then gave the cry, ‘Ready about!’ As soon as sheets had been made fast he resigned the tiller to Fife and went down below for a well-earned dram, and on coming on deck found that, with the aid of a westerly slant, the wind having veered with a shower, the Fairlie builder had been able to screw her well out to windward. In mid-channel the Duke’s cutter was stayed again, and, coming off on port tack, was just able to clear the *Pateycock*.

‘Now,’ said Fife, ‘we can beat her, I see, and we’ll pairt company with her nae mair until we’re well ahead. Lee helm, my mates—let her come!’

Round the *Pateycock* spun like a horse gin, and, jumping off, lay along the weather-line of the *Cadzow Queen*. Jump by jump she went up on her till she fairly weathered her, Fife saying, when this feat had been accomplished, ‘Ye may beat us with clean heels, but never a Fairlie boat in a dead thrash to windward.’

In about the sixth tack afterwards the *Pateycock* weathered Ailsa Craig on port, and, with boom to starboard, about a mile and a half ahead of the Duke’s cutter—went off before the wind, which was blowing about south-by-west, for Largs. Clear of the Island Rock, the big squaresail of the *Cadzow Queen* was set, and though it did not give as much power as the modern spinnaker, it was soon evident to Fife, as it was to Hafton, that she was closing the gap. Still, a stern chase is a long chase, and none of the *Pateycock’s* crew despaired of winning. The rest of the fleet they met beating down, and the owners, seeing that the race lay between Hunter’s new Fairlie cutter and the Duke of Hamilton’s cutter from Poole, very wisely



put about for the Clyde in the hopes of seeing the finish. With boom well eased off the Fairlie clipper set her shoulder down, and fairly streamed through the running seas ; Hafton, warily with the tiller, taking now and then an anxious and an uneasy glance behind him. It was well on to the afternoon before they had brought Ardrossan abeam, and then the *Cadzow Queen* was fast closing up on them.

‘I care not, Fife, how soon we gybe our boom at Fairlie Roads. Once under the Cumbræ, they’ll never catch the *Patey-cock*. Couldn’t the staysail do us a little good if you could boom it out with the boat-hook?’

‘I’ll try,’ said the Fairlie builder ; and soon the cutter was running in something like a schooner’s goose-wings. Still the *Cadzow Queen* closed up on them, and at Partoncross was almost covering, when Hafton, without giving them the slightest indication of what he was going to do, ran his boat across the bow line of the Duke’s cutter and gybed.

‘Well done !’ said Fife. ‘If ye keep the berth home we’ll do, for the wind draws through the Tan Sound.’

Up past Fairlie they sped, bow and stern, but the Clyde cutter still leading ; and soon they could see the *Highland Mary*, with her Commodore’s flag flying, off Largs pier.

‘If he cover us we’re done, Fife,’ said Hafton anxiously. ‘Boom out that staysail quick, will ye ! And hey, here, Bennet ! you’re the youngest ; jump out and sit on the end it—it’ll only be for five minutes.’

In half a minute the staysail was boomed out, and the young Banffshire man took a seat at the end of it—a by no means happy one, for he was swung at times half way to the masthead. But it won the race, for the flash from the Commodore’s gun came just as the *Cadzow Queen’s* jib was opposite the mast of the *Pateycock*, and the latter won the Punch-jug.

That night there was many a song and toast in the old ‘White Hart’ dining-room, where the *Pateycock* and the *Cadzow Queen* are still pointed out in the old picture of the Royal Northern Fleet, as the champions of that dead-beat to windward and lively run to leeward in the old Channel Match.

## THE CUI BONO OF CUB-HUNTING.

By 'TRIVIATOR.'

**I**N these days of scathing criticism and denunciation of many time-honoured pastimes and pleasures, it could not be expected that a national institution such as fox-hunting, which has held sway in England ever since (and long before) the days of Chaucer, and may be said to be more or less incorporated into our country life and social system, should escape the shafts of the malevolent, or the invective of the ignorant redressers of wrongs, or avoid a passage of arms with some crack-brained Don Quixote of the period, whose Rosinante is a pinchbeck Pegasus and whose lance is the grey goose-quill. Fox-hunting we may leave to take care of itself for the present, but cub-hunting is assailed occasionally, not only by hordes of the outer barbarians, but by sensible, rational men, who are by no means averse to a gallop in the regular season, but who see in the chase of the immature cub a certain wantonness of destruction, a lavishness of life, and a purposeless prolongation of the hunting season beyond those

“Certi fines

Ultra quos citraque nequit consistere rectum,”

according to their theories and didactic *dogmatism*s.

Now, though all houndsmen and huntsmen know full well that cubbing is nearly as vital to the discipline, efficiency, and *bien être* of a pack of fox-hounds as exercise, the useful lore may not be generally diffused. We propose to make a few remarks about the process of hunting and killing young foxes between the dates of September the first and November the fifth (Guy Fawkes' Day), and we hope to establish the necessity of this preliminary discipline, first of all, to the hounds; secondly, to the fox family; and thirdly, to the executants of the *hautes œuvres* of fox-hunting, the huntsman and his *aides de chasse*, not to speak of the privileged circle of sportsmen who are permitted by special warrant to accompany the Peep o' Day Pope what time—

‘The Moon in russet mantle clad

Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.’

Now if we are met on the threshold of an argument by the syllogism that all things cruel are wicked, that cub-hunting is cruel, and argal must be wicked, we confess at once that the logic is correct in form, and that *if* the major premiss is to be held to be sound doctrine, and the rule of life, *cadit quæstio*, we cave in at once and are ready to cry *peccavi* for life-long laches and misconceptions of what is meet and right. But the common sense of mankind revolts at such canons, and interprets the Lordship over Creation to have a very different scope and meaning. However, it is neither our purpose to argue about abstract right and wrong, or discuss the vexed problems of life, why the hound is guided by rare gifts of sense and smell in the chase of his quarry, and how that quarry in his turn is granted faculties that enable him to catch and kill other animals assigned to his use. No! we must accept the hunting of *feræ* as part of the anti-millennial state of things around us, no more to be defended than the catching of fish or the shooting of birds—on abstract principles; but what says the poet about these hidden mysteries and anomalies?—

‘Nature is art though all unknown to thee;  
 All chance, direction, that thou canst not see;  
 All discord harmony, ill understood;  
 All partial evil, universal good.’

Of course *sport* has its alloy of cruelty, but a good deal of the same sort of thing might be urged against ‘the resources of civilisation,’ and those ‘Primordial forces of Society’ on which the oracles of Printing House Square disclaimed lately so loudly—*ore rotundo*. And first of all as to the *necessity of cub-hunting as a probationary discipline to a pack of hounds*.

A modern kennel may be looked upon as a sort of canine public school, with a head master and several assistant masters, a refectory, a dormitory, and a code of rules and regulations which are strictly enforced, and the infringement of which are visited with heavy penalties. In the canine kennel as in the public school, learning is the aim and object of the institution; and discipline and obedience, being necessary to attain these ends, are maintained with scrupulous exactness. The learning of the human inmates is for the most part entirely theoretical, and is achieved during several years by very slow and patient progress. With the hounds the learning is almost purely practical, for with the exception of mastering his own name and

picking up the rules of the place, the kennel after a few months becomes merely his barrack and sanatorium ; and the business and pleasure of his existence, and the development of his highest instincts, will be found in the coverts and fields many miles away from his 'lodgings.' '*Bon chien chasse de race*' is a very good and wise saw, and derived from that Gallic race (who, though they may have lagged behind us in their notions and practice of fox-hunting as now understood, were the original source and origin of much of our venatic science and terminology). But, unfortunately, the proverb is of too wide an application : a well-bred hound will hunt by instinct, and stoop to a strong scent ere he is many months old, as every one who has seen puppies 'at walk' can testify ; but the modern fox-hound will take a turn with almost equal zest at hare, stag, marten, or otter (and indeed the latter amphibious quadruped seems, perhaps, the most capable of evoking all his natural resources of high courage and tenacity of purpose), and for that reason *first impressions* are very strong to the young hound, and the education and training of his instincts, so as to be able to concentrate all his powers of dash and drive, of tracking and puzzling out the faint clue by perseverance and nose power, combined with a certain ready reckoning up of possibilities and probabilities on the task assigned him. Under these circumstances it seems almost incredible that in the first three decades of this nineteenth century various other methods of educating young hounds should have been proposed and practised by professors of fox-hunting. It required all the authority of Peter Beckford to gainsay the theory 'that young hounds should be entered *to hare* in order to make them hunt close and rely upon their noses,' by pointing out how unnatural and irrational a thing it was to encourage a practice from which they would have to be weaned ere long by rigorous methods and the severest punishments. Even the great classic of the chase—as Beckford must always be considered—had some very heterodox opinions about hunting badgers and marten cats ; nor was he quite sound upon 'bagged foxes,' though he eschewed the arch-heresey of *drags*. Within the last thirty years or more there has been a consensus among masters of hounds that 'the fittest study for foxhounds *was fox*,' to paraphrase the famous dictum of the great rhythmic moralist ; and as old foxes were rather beyond the powers of young hounds, and handicapped the best of them too severely, the young cubs must form their first study preparatory to the



glories of the regular season. Hence every master of hounds, like Sir Richard Strachan in the well-known lines, is 'Longing to be at 'em' ere Goodwood has emptied the little village on the banks of the Thames, or the grouse have become so packed and wild as to be almost out of range of green cartridges.

Of course the date of the commencement of cub-hunting will vary with local circumstances and the progress of the seasons. When there are wide woodlands known to be full of foxes, many, if not most of them, *stub bred*, the pack, well manned, and 'personally conducted' by the steadiest of the old hounds, may begin their cubbing in August; and as foxes can take extremely good care of themselves in woods where they know all the smenses, and can make short cuts through the tangles and briers that baffle hounds much at this season, there is no fear of excessive slaughter here: the bloodthirsty huntsman is far more likely to err on the sanguinary side in small spinnies and coppices, where a litter is kennelled up, when one occasionally sees three or four cubs

'Butchered to make a huntsman's holiday:'

for unfortunately there are hunts where *swagger slaughter* is relied upon as good form. But the sensible M. F. H. never encourages prodigality of cub-killing, knowing that *waste* in September or October means *want* in February or March.

The great lessons learned by the young hounds in woodland cubbing are in *finding*, in *drawing*, in co-operation or mutual assistance, and *harmony*. To *plunge* into spinnies and thickets that scratch eyes and ears, and are altogether very unpleasant to a thin-skinned hound, is a painful experience enough; but then there is ample compensation in being the *precentor* of the pack, and to have established a reputation for boldness and acumen that sticks to a hound on the bench and in the feeding-room; while the woodlands are a cubbing concert-room, every hound joining in the chant of victory, '*La Marseillaise de la meute*.'

A good cubbing-time of, say two months, in the latter part of which hounds have been allowed to follow their élan, and pursue an old fox or two in the open, means a pack fully sure to show all the sport possible during the coming season, to hunt close and with a good head, and to be free from the dangerous, costly, and even deadly vices of riot and mutton-worrying. Hounds that have not had these rehearsals are very apt to behave like an undisciplined mob or a reckless, riotous rabble.

It seems somewhat of a paradox to speak of the necessity of cubbing *to the Fox family*, and sounds like Candide's strictures upon the English naval discipline, whereby an admiral or two was shot occasionally *pour encourager les autres*; but there is a good deal 'in it' if we look into the facts of the case. Few counties within these islands would stand or tolerate an exaggeration of foxes in their midst. The condition of their existence is *to be hunted*, and there the doctrine of the survival of the fittest comes into play. The weakest and puniest of the cubs are the first to fall victims to the fury of the hounds, and with a few mornings' experience and some hair-breadth escapes the cubs will become as wary and wild as two-season hunters. Then the huntsman may say with some admixture of truth, 'I will be cruel only to be kind,' when he has taken due toll of his litters, for he has made the survivors self-reliant, and vigilant, and very hard 'to bring to hand' under the ordinary conditions of scent and circumstance. If there were no cub-hunting we may be quite sure that cubs, and old foxes too, would be improved off the face of the land by far more cruel and torturing methods. Hence, even to foxes, 'tis true that

'Sweet are the uses of adversity.'

To the hunting staff, from the master downwards, cubbing is *the opportunity of being acquainted with the hounds, as well as of forming the pack*; knowing the characteristics of each individual hound; finding out what he can part with and draft, and what he should *retain as a most precious possession*. In *The Taming of the Shrew* we find this dialogue between a noble M. F. H. and his huntsman:

'Huntsman, I charge thee tender well my hounds!  
Saw'st thou not, boy, how Silver made it good  
At the hedge corner in the coldest fault?  
I would not lose the dog for *twenty pounds*!'

—a sum equal probably to a cool hundred now-a-days. In the Plantagenet era it was held that the huntsman should have been entered to the noble science from his boyhood, there was so much to learn in the lifelong study. The conditions of the chase have, of course, changed much since those knightly days, and perhaps *the racing down of an afternoon fox in the open* would have been thought a curious and unscientific operation by the professors of woodcraft and venerie of that epoch. But if the killing of a fox

be a quicker process now than in old times, it is not such a very easy art as may be conceived. It taxes the expert's knowledge of his hounds and of the animal he hunts, and the country over which he has to 'pursue,' and these items of knowledge are the fruits of a diligent cubbing campaign. In the early days of September most huntsmen love to have the woodlands to themselves and their hounds, and so be out of reach of a mixed crowd of undisciplined men and horses. Every day sees, however, the attendants on the pack increase, and the latter learn the lesson of threading their way through hunters' legs. To lovers of hounds nothing can be more enchanting than these *matinées musicales*, when the glades are sparkling in the early sunlight like so many valleys of diamonds, and the gossamer webs spread from bough to bough seem like silver fillagree work. They will have learnt more of the working of the hounds than in an entire regular season, and their hunters will know them, and they will know their hunters too.

## A DESPERATE POACHER.

*By* J. HARRINGTON KEENE.



SOME years ago, by special favour, I obtained permission to fish the trout preserves of Lord —, in perhaps the loveliest part of the South of England, and this, too, of all times in the year, in the May-fly season. The fact was, that though his Lordship was no fisherman himself, and was at the time abroad, he was by no means selfish over his water, provided that the recipient of leave to fish was unquestionably an angler (that is, one who knows how to fish, for many good pieces of water are spoilt by 'duffers') and a sportsman (which, being interpreted, of course means a man who doesn't fish for the pot or the mere sake of getting a mighty bag). *Par parenthèse*, our Yankee cousins have an expressive though ugly word for this latter kind of fisherman, viz. 'trout-hog.'

Having arranged for a couple of days, I immediately wrote to the keeper (by name Josiah Heath, familiarly 'Old Josh,' as I afterwards learnt) to know about the May-fly. The reply, on a post-card, was to the point: 'June 3. Sir,—The fly is up.' No more, but quite sufficient; and in the course of a few hours the train landed me at a pretty flower-garnished station on the

L. & S. W., within two minutes' walk of 'mine inn.' It was almost dark when I arrived, but the smiling face of the hostess proclaimed a welcome, and I was soon discussing an excellent dinner, which was entirely a home-grown one. By-the-by, is it not a refreshing thought to the town dweller, that what he is eating all grew under the eye of the cook, perhaps within a hundred yards of where he is enjoying it?

After dinner, as I sat smoking a cheroot and amiably criticising the stupendous works of art—family portraits in silhouette chiefly—which adorned the walls of the snug little room, there came a tap at the door, and mine hostess entered.

'If you please, Sir, Heath the keeper has looked in, and wishes to know if you would like to see him.'

'Most certainly; show him in,' I replied.

'Well, Heath,' I exclaimed, as a broad-shouldered, tall, fair man, with an immense beard, made his appearance, 'what are the prospects?'

'Good evening, Sir,' was the response. 'The fly is well up, and the wind blows up-stream to-night, with the glass steady, and I should say you've got a first-rate chance. The water was in a reg'lar bile on the Chilling Shallows from twelve to four to-day.'

'Any one else down?' I asked.

'No, Sir; nor won't be till the day after to-morrow; thee'll have it all to theeself.'

Capital! I thought, but did not say so for fear of looking selfish; though what angler is not?

'What time to-morrow, Sir?'

'About ten.'

'Very well, Sir,' was the reply. 'I am going up stream till daylight, and must now bid you good-night.'

'Stay, Heath, you will have something to drink,' I said, for I wanted a little further conversation. 'Go to the bar and get what you like, and afterwards I will go with you for an hour.'

In a few minutes we were strolling leisurely by the side of the clear and beautiful river, and 'the voices of the night,' ever most pleasant to me, were, I think, on this particular evening, yet more grateful than their wont. The harsh jar of the land-rail and the pretty song of the reed-warbler, the occasional querulous cry of the coot, and the distant quack of the ghostly heron as he flapped his way through the darkling sky, were the chief sounds which broke the silence; and as a sweet, ever-varying accompaniment, the rippling water gurgled and



murmured through the archways of the rustic bridge on which we ultimately took our stand.

Of course, fishing was our theme, and I found Heath to be a most intelligent and observant man. He could give me the results of practical observation on the natural history of fish and their foods which I never read of in books, and I soon found myself deferring to his opinion as to even the materials of which certain flies should be made. Presently our talk drifted towards poachers and poaching, and many were the amusing, and some of them dangerous encounters, he had experienced.

‘Had he ever injured any one, or half-drowned anybody in these midnight raids?’ I was led to ask, with a glance at his mighty shoulders.

‘I nearly drowned a poacher once, Sir,’ was his reply, with a quiet twinkle in his eye, which was quite discernible in the dusk; ‘and that poacher often reminds me of it now—pretty strong, too, sometimes—and I don’t suppose the party ’ll ever forgit it, neither.’

‘I don’t see why he should bear enmity,’ said I; ‘if people will take what does not belong to them, or attempt to do so, they must put up with the consequences.’

‘Jest what I tells ’em, Sir; but, bless thee! it besn’t any use. But I’ll tell ye the circumstance, Sir, if you’ll stay to listen, for that was the curiousest poacher I ever come across, and to tell ’ee truth, I don’t know what to buy for un now sometimes.’

I was mystified at the tone adopted (and I dare say the reader is, too), so I said, ‘Tell me the particulars, Joe; perhaps I can advise you.’ However, Joe shook his head solemnly at this, with a great expression of doubt.

‘You must know that when I come to my Lord, twenty-two years ago,’ he began, ‘I was as strange to these here parts as a babby unborn. My poor old mother kept house for me, and as the river had never been strictly preserved, everybody hereabouts thought they had as much right to the fish as my Lord. Of course me and the poor old lady had a fine life of it. But I was young and strong, and meant to put down the poaching, come what might, and what with summonsing, and being always on the watch, I got the river pretty clear of the night-poachers that used to come in gangs from W——, and used to take the water anywheres between A—— and W—— [a distance of seven miles]. My Lord always stood by me in all the law jobs, and soon the work didn’t want half the doing it did when I first come.’

‘But how about this poacher you half drowned?’ I asked, getting impatient.

‘I’m coming to that, Sir. Well, one morning I was going up by the withy-bed just afore light, and what should I see in the grey twilight but what seemed to me to be an otter crossing the stream. It was summer time, and, so to say, in the middle of the night, but it wasn’t cold, and so I dropped down in a “drawn” and watched as best I could to find out where Mr. Otter’s home was; for I thought I’d killed ’em all, dost see, and was sort o’ surprised. When he got to the other side of the river, lo and behold ye! it was a boy as fur as I could make out, and up he scampered, and was off into Amptid Wood like a deer, with something like a sack on his shoulders. “Oh, ho!” thinks I to myself, “that’s your little game, is it! I shall cotch yer another time.” So I gets up and goes to where the young varmint seemed to take the water, and there was footmarks, but it wasn’t a nailed boot, and a very small one, anyhow. I was fair puzzled, and went home and changed my things and told mother, and she was half a water-keeper herself, for my father was one for fifty years; so it runs in the blood, like they says wooden-legs do.

‘Well, next morning, as I was very near the same spot, I sees my Lord at work with a shoe-net, a ferricking under the boughs—right in the water he was—and when he couldn’t get the net right, down went his arm into the weeds or under the bank, and I see him pick out a couple brace. Then I couldn’t stand it no longer, but I jumps in and swims for him; but, bless thee! he was into the bank and out and across them meadows like a lamplighter. I weighed fourteen stone, and he didn’t weigh nine, and what chance had I to cotch him?’

‘Didn’t you see who it was?’ I asked.

‘Bless you, no, Sir. It was, as I said before, only twilight, and though I searched all round for miles and put the policeman on, it seemed of no use, I couldn’t find a trace of the varmint. Next morning I kept near the same place and waited, but he didn’t come, and for the next week I didn’t see a trace of him. One evening later, about half-past eight, I was coming down from Jack-wiring, and there he was, about three hundred yards from me, and jest like a otter; as soon as he see me, in he jumped and swam across, and was off like a flash of lightning; and even then I didn’t see his face.

‘This kept going on, on and off, for pretty nigh a month or six weeks, and I was getting pretty near wild over it. I could

keep going out and finding traces of where a shore-net had been used, and once I missed a beautiful brace of trout out of the hatch-hole you see yonder, and so I spoke to my Lord for more help. He laughed at me for not being able to catch a boy, and if he'd ha' knocked me down he couldn't ha' hurt me more than he did when he laughed. So, my "monkey" being up, I told him that I'd cotch the young rascal if I watched for a month, and told him I didn't want the help though I'd asked for it. He understood my feelings and said, "All right, Joe; but have help if you want it." But I didn't require it as it happened.

'The next night it was rainy, and I slapped in an eel-net in the hatchway you see yonder. Now, jest above that hatch, as you'll see to-morrow, there is a pretty piece of trout water, not over-deep, where anybody could grope a trout as easy as easy. I stopped near the net pretty well all night, and as morning got near I walked upstream to see if anybody was about. As I was going back to it, who should I see, just above the hatch, but Matey—the poacher who had tormented me so. He was busy groping the fish out to a pretty tune, and not three yards above the hatchway where my net was.

'Now, let me tell you, Sir, that anybody in the water above a hatch don't see the net, and if they was to go through the hatch when it ain't there they'd only get a ducking, for the force of water is so great that they would be cast up on the shallow below without hurt. But if they goes through when the net's there, they goes into the net, and in a minute or less they're dead if you don't cut 'em free net and all.

'Well, Matey was very busy, as I said, and I thought, "I'll have you now, my gentleman!" So I goes round and gets quietly into the reeds jest opposite. The river was wide, as you can see, and I know'd that if he tried to get ashore he'd have to clamber up the camp sheathing, by which time I could wade across and cotch him. Presently I gets near enough to the edge of the water, and his head was still down. With a jump I was in. He started up and made for the bank, but, jest before I grabbed at him, he slipped with the force of water, and went clean through the hatch-hole. I know'd what that meant, and, drawing my knife and springing to the side of the net-frame, and, shoving myself against the frame of the hatch, I stooped down and run the knife round the string that held the net to the frame. Whoosh! it went, and in two seconds there was what seemed a dead body on the shallow below, net and all. In a





"In a moment I had it in my arms"





moment I had it in my arms and was running like mad home. Just as I got indoors and cut the net off the poor young fellow he give a gasp. Upstairs, jest as he was, I took and laid him on my bed; and mother begins to open his necktie as I undone his boots. All of a sudden she give such a cry, mother did—I think I can hear her now—and says, “Go downstairs and make up the fire, Josh—get plenty of water boiling; I’ll get him into bed. *Do as I tell you!*” Of course I went. Presently down come mother looking very queer.

“How is he?” says I.

“I’ve give him some brandy, and he’ll do now,” says she, and then comes across to where I was and whispered in my ear—

“*Josh, that poacher upstairs is a woman!*”

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

‘Well, Sir, to make a long story short, I found out that she come from N——, and had been supporting her bedridden mother by helping herself from my Lord’s river for a long time. She’d been brought up with her brothers, who had taught her their own bad tricks, and one by one they had died, or gone away, nobody knew where, till it was a case almost of starvation for the old woman and herself. I didn’t tell my Lord much about it, but he forgave her when he heard the story; and though I look on a poacher as a bad lot, I somehow made a fool of myself over that gal. So I thought I’d stop her little fishing game, and married her, as my Lord said that was the best thing I could do, then I should know she was safe. You’ll see her tomorrow, Sir, if you pass the cottage, and she’ll be glad to give you a cup of tea if you will condescend to partake of it.’

Need I say I made the acquaintance of the aquatically inclined lady, and found a buxom, pleasant body, with a houseful of sons and daughters, and not at all like a Desperate Poacher.

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## A DRAG HUNT IN FRANCE.

*By ‘NEMO.’*



RAG à trois heures:—vous me ferez grand plaisir en vous y rendant; rendezvous à St. Croix.’

Such was the invitation written on the back of my friend’s (De B.’s) card, which I found lying on my table when I returned, duly top-hatted, frock-coated, &c., from attending Divine Service in the quaint little English

church in Brittany, on as lovely a summer Sabbath morn as ever delighted the eyes, or breathed fresh life into a pair of worn-out English lungs; and I sincerely trust that no more heinous sin may be laid to my charge than that I could not resist accepting the invitation to hunt upon a Sunday. No doubt to a fox-hunter who has never got away from his own coverts to take a run abroad, the very idea of hunting in the leafy month of June seems ridiculous in the extreme, and one can well fancy some surly old whip muttering something about "them furrineering chaps a knocking their 'osses legs about when the ground is like hiron;" or the pangs that George Carter would feel, if suddenly ordered to take his hounds out to run a drag on a sweltering hot day. If any one who knows that prince of huntsmen should chance to read this I feel sure they will agree with me, that George's language would do full justice to such a proposition. But, however, we must hark back a bit.

Well, about two p.m. we started to drive to the meet, a distance of some six miles through leafy country lanes; the cloudless summer sky overhead, and an intensely hot sun pouring down on all; the air redolent with the perfume of honeysuckle and wild roses—a day, in fact, suggestive of tennis and iced claret, of Ascot, Sandown; anything, in fact, but hunting.

However, there is no doubt about it: there are some red coats just in front, and what memories spring up unbidden at the sight of the well-known colour! The fine sky vanishes, the leaves fall off the trees, we are astride the old grey horse at the corner of that little patch of gorse; forty waving sterns, each tipped with blood, are raging to and fro in the gorse. 'C-o-p! Forrard! away!' One deep twang of the horn, a bursting crash of music from forty of the grandest dog-hounds in England. 'Come along old man!' to the old grey, and we settle down in our saddles, feeling we are in for a clipper, with sound old English pasture to ride over. No, we don't though. Alas! it is only a day-dream, and we are in reality jogging along a rough Brittany lane, with two red coats in front of us. Yes, they are red coats, there is no doubt of it, but there the similarity ends: they are, I blush to say, surmounted by unmistakable 'bowler-hats,' and they partly shroud from view brown cords and black boots. This, it appears, is the correct hunting-dress in this part of the world, and very funny it looks to eyes accustomed to a 'Leicestershire' get-up.

But what is this coming with a rattle behind us? This is the Marquis de Z., driving four ponies, each about the size of Newfoundland dogs, from a sort of low basket-carriage; and his Marquisship has on white leathers, a black hunting cap, and the inevitable black boots. And now the crowd thickens, some in red, some in grey, uniforms of Dragoon officers, ditto Hussars, all combined to make a scene which is, if not much like hunting, festive. And here come 'the hounds,' about six couple of ancient English harriers, very fat, and mostly lame, which is not to be wondered at considering the state of the ground they are hunted on; and the huntsman, a small, wiry little man, who sits his horse like a workman, but is nearly lost in the boa-constrictor-like folds of an enormous horn, which entwines his body.

*La bête*, who on this occasion was a right good fellow in the shape of a well 'aniseeded' officer of Dragoons, having been allowed ten minutes' law, the huntsman and several other gentlemen unwinded their horns and played a fantasia in B flat. The hounds awoke, gave two or three 'tow yows,' and lolloped away along the road. They had better mend their pace, though, for half the chivalry of France is thundering at their heels; and at least one exclamation of woe and pain peals through the summer air as some wretched hound finds a score of hoofs on top of him. On they speed through three or four fields, when the fat hounds proclaim a check. '*Les habit rouges sont superbe!*' is the opinion of the ladies standing by me. But hark! Another fantasia is borne on the gale, this time a very long and complicated affair; and it proclaims that the hounds, having suddenly remembered that they will be fed at the end of the drag, have trotted on again, headed by a venerable sage, who every now and then throws two deep notes, which in the distance sounds exactly like, 'Come on! come on!' Now they are lost to sight for a few minutes in a small wood. Here come half the pack in full cry, running exactly where the trail has *not* been laid: which is not much to be wondered at, considering that for the last five minutes a good half of the field have gaily cantered along in front of the pack. However, a few sonorous blasts from the enormous horns soon put matters right, and once more the hunt is in full swing. On they go in a long-drawn-out Indian file, along the bridle-paths; for, as may be well imagined, the crops are not in a state to be ridden over in the middle of June.



And now they come to the solitary 'lep' of the day, a low bank, which alas! has to be taken in Indian file; so that if there were any pace, ere the last sportsman got over, the leaders of the hunt would be lost to view. However, the fat old hounds are toddling comfortably along. The hot June sun has absorbed most of the 'aniseed,' so there is no hurry, and soon all are on equal footing again. Now they come through a ford in the river. By the way, there was no water there on this occasion, so the picturesque effect of horses and hounds splashing their way through was lost. On they came—or, rather, should have come—through the forest glades, to finish up in front of the assembled beauty of the neighbourhood. But, alas! the scent gave way, despair was depicted on every countenance, when some one is seized with a bright idea. An officer devotes himself; his horses' hoofs are well anointed with 'aniseed;' he goes back a short distance and rides into the clearing; the hounds—such as can be found—are laid on, and follow gloriously on his track; the huge horns are once more put into requisition; the 'hallali,' is played; a large sackfull of raw meat is provided and literally 'thrown to the dogs,' who get up a momentary enthusiasm, and really make a most creditable attempt to imitate the breaking-up of a gallant fox, after 'twenty minutes on the grass, without a check, boys!' But the fun is to come. The Dragoon band is in attendance; a sumptuous luncheon is provided by the hospitable officers of the two cavalry corps; the champagne goes round; the eyes of beauty sparkle more brightly; the stalwart, grey-headed old general—a soldier every inch—is as lively as the youngest subaltern; and the same voice that has pealed o'er many a bloody field is now heard, ordering a quadrille instead of a charge; the merry forest glades resound with the soft strains of the band and the silvery laughter of the fair sex; and soon all are footing it gaily on the greensward. But, alas! everything has an end; and one by one the company dwindle away; the sober old hounds, having digested their meal, jog quietly home; cigars are handed round; and the drag of June the 15th is a thing of the past.

I may add that the French officers are as keen as possible on sport; hunt they will, in all weathers and at all times, roe deer, hares, foxes, and if none of these are to be had, 'drag;' and if they can't get along better, it is not their fault but that of the small enclosures into which the country is divided, the almost

unbroken chain of covers, and the state of feeling amongst the small peasant proprietors, who absolutely refuse to allow their land to be ridden over. But they are a right merry lot, and enjoy themselves vastly, in spite of all drawbacks.

## ICE-YACHT *VERSUS* TRAIN.

By 'CHAMELEON.'



OW then, boys, tumble in ! We're just in time, and nothing to spare.'

So spake the Captain, as we hurried on board the queerest craft it has ever been my lot to sail in.

It was an American Ice-yacht, on one of the Bays of North America, and we were going to race with the down-train—wind *versus* steam.

The ice-yachts are most remarkable structures, and are now found in great numbers almost everywhere in Northern America where there is ice enough to sail them on.

They are simply a huge wooden frame, not unlike the deck-plan of an ordinary yacht, but more pointed at the stern, with a stout centre-piece running down the middle from stem to stern. At the stern is laid a sort of platform, more like a large shallow box than anything else, and a large iron blade is fixed underneath; this acts as the heel of a skate, and also as a rudder, being attached to an iron through the stern-post, and worked by the tiller above.

Right across the midships extends a huge beam, several feet longer than the length of the yacht herself; into the centre of this, and through the centre-piece before spoken of, is stepped the mast.

The bowsprit is another unsophisticated piece of timber, firmly fastened in its usual place.

At each end of the beam amidships is securely fastened a huge iron blade, or runner; and on these two, and the one at the stern that steers her, the ice-yacht runs.

When she goes straight before the wind she runs on all three, as on an even keel; but when you bring her up a point or two, up goes one end of the beam about sixteen feet in the air, and away she flies on the leeward runner and the rudder-blade.

Some idea may be formed from this brief description of a mode of travelling which is fascinating to a degree.

True, you are jolted about somewhat every now and then, and, at first, hold on to the gunwale or holdfast, 'like grim Death to a dead nigger,' wondering how long you are to be allowed to remain in the boat, or how soon an erratic swerve to avoid a crack, or a snow hillock, will send you scooting on your own account across the lake.

These are drawbacks it must be confessed, but they are soon surmounted ; and when once the natural nervousness has vanished, you will find the delirium of speed so entrancing that you will forsake every other pastime while the weather is favourable.

The speed of an ice-boat is something marvellous, and when sailing close-hauled, occasionally *exceeds the speed of the wind that propels it*.

An island stretched across the bay in question, and this tended to keep the bay tolerably smooth, and necessarily improved the surface of the ice ; and as this water freezes easily, and thaws late, it may be regarded as the headquarters of the ice-yacht division.

Racing the down-train is a favourite pastime, and the engineers of almost every train respond to a wave of the handkerchief by a shrill whistle, and away they go.

We were rather late in starting, so scrambled on board, sitting on the floor or on the cross scantlings, for seats there are none.

'Push her off' cried the Captain ; and we glided slowly from the wharf side.

As soon as we cleared the shadow of the wharf the breeze began to catch us ; and, although it was merely a puff, we slipped along at a great pace, and away we sped to the extreme end to meet the train.

Watches were inspected, an extra pull was taken at the huge mainsheet, and the yacht put steadily into the wind's eye, ready to swing round at a moment's notice.

Moments seem minutes, and minutes hours, whilst we wait !

Suddenly a roaring, rumbling noise is heard, and the down express steams into sight : the Captain waves his handkerchief, the engine-driver whistles back ; down goes the helm, and, with a start and a shiver, away we fly.

For an instant we can see nothing ; everything is indistinct



with a start and a shower  
we play away

W. Alexander





and hidden by the sudden rush through the air, impelled by a gale, the full force of which we have not yet felt.

The side-ropes and rings are clutched, and by degrees we get used to the high speed, and see the train thundering along by our side, with white handkerchiefs waving out of the windows, and, I dare say, shouts if we could hear them; but these are a mile behind almost before they are fairly uttered.

Now we feel the full force of the gale; the ice seems a blurred mass when we look at it; little drifts of snow impede our course every now and again, and we seem to drag through them for a second, to dash out on the other side with renewed vigour. Yachts heading in an opposite direction are passed like a flash of lightning; how we avoided them and threaded in safety the crowd of boats and people remains a marvel.

The wind now freshens, and the windward runner goes higher and higher into the air, until it is nearly over our heads, while the leeward runner scores a long, endless track, that is deeper than ever, and sends a shower of snowy, flaky fragments of shaven ice into the air, until it rises like the spray round the cutwater of a yacht running close-hauled.

Ah! is the train slowing down, or what? No! the train is going no slower, it is we who are going faster.

We have crept up from the rear car, nearly half-way along the train, and as the new capfull of wind catches us we tear along, gaining inch by inch, car by car, until we are nearly level.

Suddenly the engineer waves his hand, pointing right ahead of us, and the three shrill notes of caution thrill from the whistle of the locomotive.

'What is it?' we ask, as the Captain jumps to his feet, and the engineer redoubles his gesticulations.

'A crack in the ice,' answers the Captain, straining his eyes, and taking no further heed of the train signals beyond waving his hand.

Heads now line the train from end to end, stoker and driver are leaning out of the car, all gazing in wonder as to what we are going to do.

'Guess we'll clear it, boys,' said the Captain; 'grip your hold-fasts and lay low.'

Instinctively we follow his advice, peering somewhat anxiously at the dark line that is growing broader and broader.

An instant, and we can see the rippling water rushing between the edges of the crack.

It is a wide jump, but, like the Greeks, we have burned our boats; it is too late for retreat, and before we know where we are we are over the rushing water, then a heavy shock, and a lurch that nearly turns us all out; the runners, however, have struck the ice square, and away we go, clear ahead of the train, which, as we near the end of the course, and veer sedately round, passes us with a cheer and a waving of hats and scarves, in congratulation of our plucky victory.

'By the stars and stripes, that was touch and go!' said the Captain. 'I guess we will run down to leeward and see if it narrows at all.'

Off we go, the curious machine obeying every touch of the helm as if endued with life; a mile or so down we find the crack is much smaller, and over we go, with scarcely a perceptible shock.

Pipes are lit, and we run smoothly back to the wharf, answering hails all the way down as to the success of our run, which is duly noted down in the annals of the Club log-book.

The wild excitement of the race is over, and there is only the memory of the roaring train, and the trembling, swaying rush of the ice-yacht, deeply impressed for ever on my mind.

## 'MISS FIDGET,' A TIMBER JUMPER.

By 'AVON.'



ANY years ago I went one afternoon to have a look at a small local steeple-chase, got up chiefly by the sporting tradesmen of a country town and the farmers of the locality in which I was then residing. I was rather late, and only just in time to see the coming in of the first race. The last of the whole lot—walking in, in fact—was a queer-looking, corky-brown mare, ridden by a friend's groom named Mike, an Irishman of course. Mike had been in training-stables, but could not keep his tongue quiet, and besides which he was in the habit of taking too much of that which inebriates but does not always cheer. In plain words Mike was constantly getting drunk, and so got his discharge, and was taken on by my friend as second horseman, and so long as he kept sober no better man could be found; he regularly got dismissed once a-month, and as regularly taken on

again, for he would not go. Mike had no doubt 'licked the blarney stone,' and there was no withstanding his pleadings to be reinstated; and so they went on for years. He was a really good horseman, and a capital servant—barring his little failing; and his master, being an easy-going sort of fellow, put up with his faults on account of his really good qualities.

'Mike,' said I, 'that rum-looking beggar can jump a bit I suppose?'

'Jump, yer honour!' said Mike. 'She would jump the Liffey if it only stood upright; but she's no more use here than a piece of bog oak.'

'Do you think she would carry me with the beagles?'

'Do I? Sure there niver was a better lepper for stone walls and timber, and by this same token—holding out his whip—she can jump anything her own hoit.'

Now what does the reader imagine that same token, the whip that he was holding out, was? He would never guess, so I may as well enlighten him at once. It was a good-sized kitchen poker! Mike, being scarcely heavier than a wet great-coat, had to carry a good deal of extra weight, and not being able to find sufficient on the spot, had recourse to the novel expedient of borrowing a kitchen poker from the landlord of the 'Plough,' a sporting inn close to the course.

'I hope you hadn't to lay on to her with it,' said I, 'in the same loose manner that the timber was laid on in a certain race in America, between General Ommaney T. Squatter's "Worm-Eater," and Colonel Binnaker O'Splott's "Apple Sas." Worm-Eater being a bit of a slug, the rider had to use a good-sized young tree, the only article which could be got which would make any impression on him; and even then the timber had to be laid on with considerable looseness to produce any effect.'

'No, by gorra!' said Mike: 'if I had I should have broke some of her ribs.'

After the business was over I found out the owner of 'Miss Fidget,' as she was called—and properly named she was too, as I subsequently discovered. A sporting vet., who, knowing her jumping powers, had bought her purposely to win this race, but was wofully deceived, for she was as slow as a man, and as I have said, came in alone, last. We very soon dealt for the mare, as her owner had dropped his money pretty freely, and was glad to get a purchaser at any price.

This was, I think, the first animal of the genus horse I ever



purchased on my own account.' Miss Fidget was only 14.3, and was a good-shaped, well-bred-looking animal, except in colour, which was about like that of a singed mouse; she had rare shoulders, and was deep in girth, but she had a dark stripe down her back and a slight one down her shoulders, and I cannot help thinking must have had some remote connexion with the family of a very early stubborn friend of mine with long ears, whose acquaintance I very soon cut, because he was an ass. Fidget had, moreover, besides this appearance, certain mulish or donkeyish tricks, which made her anything but a pleasant animal in the stable. She would come at you open-mouthed, then turn round and kick at you in the most vicious manner, if she were in a loose box, and when tied up she would hit out sideways in a way that would have been no disgrace to an accomplished boxer, and it was never safe to go near her without a good ash-plant in your hand; and even then it required great care as to how you handled her. A pleasant animal, certainly; the biggest brute in the stable any man ever had; but out of the stable, and when once you were on her back, no pleasanter animal or a quieter could be found. She was, moreover, a perfect snaffle-bridle mare, and an extraordinary fencer, but her great *forte* was at timber and stone walls, at either of which she was perfect, and the height seemed to make no difference to her. She was very easy to sit, never refused or made a mistake, and on several occasions I pounded the whole field by jumping some impracticable looking stile, or stiff timber, in an awkward corner.

To give an idea of her capabilities in this line, I well recollect going out with a young officer of artillery, for what we called 'an afternoon's timber jumping.' He was riding a well-known clever old rat-tailed black horse, and we jumped twelve gates in succession, and wound up by getting a 'fine finisher' in some new stiff and high post and rails, which we *fortunately* came across, just put up apparently for our diversion. It was a nice level piece of turf, and the jump to two wild young rascals was irresistible, particularly after such fine practice as we had had. So at it we went; the old black horse being the faster of the two was first over, and cleared it like a bird. Fidget was not long after him, but not being very nice as to an inch or two, took it into her head to go at one of the posts. She got over all right, but just caught the top of the post with one of her hind-legs and took off a bit of skin, about five inches long. Our exploit got

noised abroad, and some people who went up to look at the place the next day (which was easy to be found, as there was the piece of skin and hair still sticking on the post), measured it, and found the post just measured five feet seven inches, just eight inches higher than her back.

Describing this appears to be rather egotistical, but, alas ! it happened so many years ago—more than I care to think about—that I do not feel so diffident in relating it as I otherwise might do. My friend not long afterwards joined the army in the Crimea, and met his death before Sebastopol, a chain-shot having cut off his legs ; but he lived long enough to show that he died, not only a soldier's death, but that of a Christian gentleman. A handsome monument in his parish church records that Lord Raglan, in his despatches, much deplored the loss of so promising an officer. Little did we think at the time of our lark that the post and rails was to be his last jump.

Now, in order to dispel the melancholy thoughts aroused by alluding to the lamented death of my friend, I must relate an anecdote of a more cheery and amusing character. I usually rode Fidget with a pack of beagles which were kept in my neighbourhood, and it being purely a stone-wall country it suited her exactly, and as I have said, she was not very fast, their pace suited her too, and, even at this distance of time, I can recollect perfectly the capital sport I used to get. There is a great pleasure in being able to get over larger obstacles than anybody else, and though I do not take any credit to myself for the performance, I used to delight in coming to bigger walls than common ; in fact, the bigger they were the better they seemed to suit her, and with a horse that understands them there is no easier fence, the taking off and landing being generally good.

'Get away back !' I fancy the reader exclaiming. 'What about the anecdote ?' I plead guilty to constantly rambling, skirting, and getting off the line, and if I had been a hound I should have been drafted long ago.

I used occasionally to ride my jumping cob with a pack of fox-hounds, but as I had a long way to go to meet them it was only occasionally. It was an old-fashioned pack, such as described in the *Fine Old English Gentleman*.

'A pack of fox-hounds of the good English breed ;  
Most musical and staunch they were,  
But not much famed for speed.'

They showed good sport of a kind, but would not suit a modern fox-hunter's notion; at least those who like the short, sharp, and decisive style of business. Foxes were not very plentiful in the country, and on one occasion there had been a very long draw without finding. Covert after covert was explored, but still a fox could not be found. At length a prolonged but exceedingly doubtful note from a single hound struck on the huntsman's ear; he listened for a moment, and then called out to his whip,—

'What's that, Jack?'

'That be Seusan, master.' Susan being a noted and reliable old hound,

'Hoick to Susan, my lads! that's gospel, I'll swear!'

'No it bain't, master!' she be *sitting on a thorn*.'

Now I fear my readers have had enough of Fidget and her doings, so I will, having said so much about beagles, attempt an ideal run with those little stickers to the line of a hare. I am one of those—an old fogey, the reader may say—who like to see a hare hunted to death by suitable hounds, and not raced to death by dwarf fox-hounds. They are all very well, say, in a country like the Brighton Downs, where people go out for a gallop, and where the old pure and genuine style of hare *hunting* is out of place; but there is nothing to a man who goes out to enjoy hound-work more pleasing, to my mind, than to see the busy, merry little hounds work out all the windings and intricate dodges of a hare when she is not overpaced and driven out of her country. Do you go out merely for the sake of a gallop and a lark across country, or, casting the riding part of the business on one side, to enjoy the wonderful instinct and perseverance of the hound? If the latter, follow me in a run with such a pack, in which the faculty of hunting an animal to death with the least possible assistance is *de rigueur*.

There sits the old Squire on his square-tailed, fine-shouldered, well-bred, staid old hunter, troubled like his master with 'the slows,' with his pack of spangled beauties spreading out all round him.

'Heu, loot! Heu, loot!'

'Is that a clod of earth?' thinks he. 'No, by Jove! it's she right enough!' He is just turning his horse quietly round, without increasing his pace, which is a walk, and without making the slightest sign that he has discovered poor puss, in order that she may be put up when the hounds' backs are





Confound it! Here comes  
old Foyles and his harriers  
Give me the Currant Jelly!



Seen the Hunted Hare young man?  
Yes! I have old man..  
Where is she?  
In my game bag, I be sure.  
(Now don't bless you, it was  
only just through.)



The Merry Harriers.



The beauty of going  
with the Harriers is that  
if you stop in one place  
they're sure to come  
back to you



You can see all the fun too  
on a pony.





turned, and the pack then drawn quietly over the scent; when up she jumps and steals away as hard as she can rattle, with her ears laid back. Every hound sees her at the same moment, and away they go, flinging their tongues as merrily as marriage bells. Puss pops through the hedge and turns away to the left; the little hounds are close after her, with their heads up and as wild as hawks, but quickly put them down when they find they have lost sight of her. They fly away thirty or forty yards to the right, but skim round beautifully like a flight of teal half inclined to settle, and stream away like one o'clock as they catch her scent. The old Squire cannot resist giving them the least bit of a cheer, but there is no necessity, for every little hound is at it hammer and tongs, each one thoroughly resolved to catch her himself. The Squire settles speedily down on the right, looking anxiously forward to see what sort of a fence that is at the bottom. Away go two or three of the fast ones, who are determined to see all the fun with Bob the whip, and fly the fence without touching a twig. Half-a-dozen jolly farmers on young horses, an old gentleman and a very young lady, all make for the nearest gates and gaps. Ten minutes of this sharp work and we get into a lane, and there is a check.

'Hold hard, if you please, gentlemen,' says the Squire. 'Stand still, you young rascal on the pony.'

His hounds are as busy as bees trying this way and that, but cannot hit her off. The Squire has his eye on old Guider, a blue-mottled and tan, with a goodish bit of John Ward's neck-cloth about his throat. The old fellow is very busy, but taking every pains to satisfy himself that he is right. All at once up goes his head, and he gives one long musical note.

'Yooi doit, old man! Hark to Guider!'

But it is hardly needed, for the old hound never babbles and never tells a lie, and every hound flies to the well-known cry. They carry it steadily down the lane, all eager, but trusting to the experience and the superior nose of Guider, who is always good in a road, down to a turn in it, where there is a gate. Under it they scramble as fast as they can; there is a fine large grass field, and away they go chiming merrily along. There is a capital scent, and everybody is enabled to see and enjoy the fun down to the end of the field, where there is a big, and (except to the well-mounted) an unnegotiable fence, which Bob and the few who ride are quickly over. Away goes the

Squire to a well-known gap lower down, followed by the rest of the field. Luckily the hounds have turned that way, and by the time they have all scrambled through as well as they can they are in good place again. The hounds are still running beautifully to the tune of 'I wish I was with Dinah!'—no stragglers, no shirkers, and all running compactly in a body.

'What the deuce does that fellow want at the bottom of the field—eh?'

He is shooting with a brace of spaniels.

'Hold hard! Here she comes, headed by that pot-hunter,' says the Squire.

But the little hounds are so good, and are hunting so well, they don't overrun it a yard, but turn as the hare turned.

'Stand still, please,' says the Squire. 'Yooi doit, Lasher! my boy!' as the eager young hound dashes through the hedge. Merrylass, Bonnybell, Blueskin, and the rest all trying to get through first, and throwing their musical tongues most vigorously. All get over the fence, which is a small one; they turn to the right, and reach very near the spot where she was found. All at once they throw up. Out comes the Squire's watch.

'Thirty-five minutes, and scarcely what may be called a check,' says he.


Out they spread like a fan, but cannot recover her line. The Squire catches hold of them and makes his cast under the hedge. They begin to feather, flourishing their sterns. Old Jovial has it.

'Hoick to Jovial! there, my beauties!' and they go the round almost *da capo*. They now get into a ploughed field (the first they have had), and throw up in the middle of it. They are allowed to make their own cast, and can make nothing of it. The Squire is just going to try what he can do, when old Farmer Cole nearly rides over the top of her in a furrow. Up she jumps, and goes ambling along (poor thing! she is blown, and does not look half the size she did). They are running in view, and are just going to lay hold of her when she slips through the fence; the hounds are quickly after, and in the middle of the next field they run into her.

'Now that's what I call hunting a hare as she ought to be hunted,' says the Squire.

## HOW THE BIBBLINGTON CUP WAS WON.

*By 'H. H.'*

HE Bibblington Coursing Club was a great institution at the time when some of us who are now old were yet young, and the Bibblington Cup was one of the great coursing prizes of the day, especially in its own district, which had long been famed for its stout hares and the goodness of the greyhounds which were bred in the neighbourhood. Nay, more than that, even in those times, when men kept at home and were much more localised than they are now, dogs of repute were brought from considerable distances to compete for it; and although, of course, it was not to be compared with the Waterloo Cup of the present day, a good deal of money changed hands over the event, and a very neat sum could be won by any one who knew how to 'pull the strings' and 'work the oracle.'

The members of the Bibblington Club were, on the whole, an exclusive set, Conservative to a degree, and flattered themselves that they had established the club to maintain purity of blood in their canine pets; from what I can remember of them I should imagine they must have been direct descendants of those old coursers of the last century, who, according to Beckford, held that all greyhounds should be either black or white, or black and white, and that all not being of the fashionable colour were curs. Their exclusiveness did not, however, go to this length, but stopped short at tabooing the wire-haired breed altogether, and enacting laws and regulations which prevented them from contending for their stakes. Whether they were afraid to meet the Hughie Graham blood in fair field, or what was the cause of the enactments, matters little; we have only to deal with the fact that they would not allow them to contend.

When the Club was in the height of its fame and glory, there settled in a neighbouring village to Bibblington a certain Captain, who, for the sake of convenience, we will call Sharpset; with him came a clever kennel of greyhounds, a couple of small, but very bloodlike ponies, and little else in the



shape of furniture or luggage. The fact was, Sharpset took a cottage with just sufficient accommodation for his kennel and stud out of doors, and himself and an elderly house-keeper within. Where he came from no one appeared exactly to know, although most were acquainted with him, for there was not a race or coursing meeting for miles around at which Sharpset was not present, and, if report could be believed, at which he did not win money. Moreover, his ponies could trot well in harness and gallop under the saddle—one being *particularly* good at either; so that many a pony-race and trotting-match brought grist to his mill, while his greyhounds judiciously placed won him several stakes of some little importance, and frequently he sold them for a good deal of money. As a matter of fact, they and the ponies together, with an intimate knowledge of whist and picquet, formed his principal sources of income (baccarat and nap not being fashionable in his day). He had, moreover, the further accomplishment of being a good pigeon-shot. Why he should have been elected (as he soon was) a member of the Bibblington Club it was hard to say; but there are men who can go where they like, and do what they please, and he was one of them. He told a good story, could stand his two bottles without affecting his manners or sobriety, and was ready to dine with any one who asked him. In age he was perhaps forty, and looked a few years older. He seldom entertained visitors, as he said his bachelor establishment could not compass it, but what he did have at his house was of the very best, and his cigars were the talk of the country.

Sharpset's principal companion was a parson of sporting proclivities, who lived about a dozen miles away in the hills: a keen courser, a good cricketer, an unerring shot, and perhaps the best fisherman in the county. Report said he had no objection to back his opinion about either dog or horse, and that to a pretty considerable amount. He and Sharpset had been schoolfellows, and were at the same college at Oxford afterwards, so that an acquaintance or friendship, much cemented, it must be owned, by similarity of taste, had been maintained between them. It so chanced that the Parson had driven across to Sharpset's 'crib,' as he called it, one January afternoon, in order to meet the Thistledown hounds the next morning—the meet being close at hand; and the good brown horse who drew his dog-cart also carried him in the

chase at least twice a-week during open weather, besides other duties. As they reclined in their easy-chairs on each side of the fire, after a simple but excellent dinner, discussing some real old Highland whisky and a sample of the aforesaid undeniable cigars, the Parson said,

‘Of course you will win the Bibblington Cup, old fellow, as you are a member. We ought to get a good pull over that.’

‘Well, I fear not. I find the hares here are so uncommonly stout, and these fellows’ dogs, from what I can see of them, all run on and stay well. Mine are quick, clever, and fast enough for anything ; but with these hares, unless they can kill at once, it’s no certainty.’

‘They are handy with their teeth, are they not?’ asked the Parson.

‘No doubt of it ; and if they can knock their hares about to start with would soon score. But the slips are sure to be long, and when once the hares here get well upon their legs it’s no certainty for me, I can tell you. I have seen enough to be quite sure of that.’

I fear a very unclerical expression escaped the Parson’s lips at this announcement, after which Sharpset went on:—

‘If I could run the bitch I gave my cousin Joe up in the North I could win, because she is fast clever, and can stay for a week ; but it’s no use to think of that, because she is of the rough breed on one side, and these duffers here bar them as curs.’

‘Is she very rough?’ asked the Parson, after smoking in silence, and thinking deeply for the space of about fifteen minutes.

‘No, not very rough, but quite enough “to put her out of court” in this Club. She shows the old Gilbertfield blood a little about the muzzle and just along the back—that is all.’

‘Could you train a dog at my place?’ was the next question.

‘Oh, yes : could not have a better locality.’

‘Then, by Jove, send and get the bitch at once, and if we don’t win a pot of money over the “Cup,” I am no sinner, and you could not have better security than that!’

‘I tell you she is rough, and they won’t let her run here. It is all very well in the North, but our Club will not have it.’

‘Well, old fellow, I should not have taken you for a flat if you had not told me so yourself. Again I say, get the bitch, take her to my place, and you shall win the “Cup” if she is

good enough. I presume you can run any dog you like in your nomination ?'

'Certainly, any dog not barred.'

'All right. Get the bitch and ask no questions.'

Sharpset did as he was told, but could in no wise make out how his friend the Parson was going to get a rough greyhound through a large stake that was only meant for smooth ones. But then, keen a hand as he was, the Parson could give him two stone and beat him in a canter any day, although Sharpset would not have liked to admit it.

Within the course of a week or so the bitch arrived from the North at the snug little Vicarage, stowed away amidst the wild downs and hills, where many a Derby favourite had taken his gallops, and Sharpset took some of the best of his kennel there to meet her and train with her. When the friends looked her over they were both fain to admit that she was one of the most beautiful hounds they had ever set eyes on ; and, saving the rough muzzle, or 'Gilbertfield whiskers,' and a few rough hairs on her back, there was very little to show that she came of a rough strain of dogs.

'We may as well begin at her at once,' said his Reverence, 'and get rid of this long hair ; so that, should any one chance to see her, they can take no exception to her appearance.' And forthwith, to his friend's astonishment, he pulled out of his pocket a fine comb and somewhat large pair of scissors. 'Is she good-tempered ? Perhaps you had better hold her muzzle, Jack,' he remarked ; and then it dawned on Jack Sharpset's mind that he was going to *clip her* ! It was true enough. Clipping was in that day only in its infancy, even for horses, and the art of doing it was looked on as almost as great a mystery as conjuring or legerdemain ; one of the best professors of the clipping art was the parson of Flintvale, and it had struck him that he would have no more trouble in turning a rough greyhound into a smooth one than a long-coated horse into a short one. Her colour was also in their favour, for, being a brindle bitch, and, like her sire, altering her colour with the seasons, it would not be very easy to detect that her coat had been tampered with. Her head was soon done to the satisfaction of both parties ; and as to her back, it really required only a little trimming-up rather than clipping, so that an hour bestowed on her with the scissors and the singeing-lamp altered her in such sort, that not a soul would have known in Maybloom

the smooth greyhound (that was the name she was to run in, to represent a like coloured one of the Captain's) Judy, the rough-coated bitch of the North.

'Well,' said the Parson, when they were smoking their cigars after dinner, 'to-morrow we will put Judy—I beg pardon, Maybloom—with the best of yours, and give her a longish slip after one of our down hares. The sort, I know, run very true on the scut; and there is nothing like the real thing to keep their pipes open.'

This was agreed to, and soon after breakfast the clipped bitch was slipped with a fawn of Sharpset's at the foot of a gradual ascent of about a mile of down and a good amount of 'law' allowed. Away they went, the fawn leading lengths from the slip, from being so much quicker on her legs, and with a weak hare she would no doubt have done nearly work enough to win a course before the North-country bitch could get in; but this was not a hare to come to hand very quickly, and a good quarter of a mile was past ere the dogs began to near her, and gradually, but surely, Judy was seen to draw to the front. Fifty yards from the hare they were racing neck and neck, but from that point she went in front, brought her hare round, and let in the fawn, who served himself three or four times very cleverly before losing possession. Some ding-dong give-and-take work ensued, but in the end Judy got the hare to herself, and finished with a very meritorious kill.

'Good enough that, I think,' said the Captain. 'And we can get the bitch pounds better yet.'

'Good enough, certainly,' was the answer; 'but we will have another spin with your black and white dog. They say these rough ones run better as they go on.'

'So be it.' After an hour's rest Judy again went into the slips with a fresh opponent, and acquitted herself better even than in the first course.

'Now we must get the money on,' said the Parson. 'Of course you will have some dogs ostensibly going in your nomination at home, where every one can see them. I suppose the Club have a fair notion of their form?'

'They have been at great pains to find out, so they should have.'

No doubt he was right, for there was money always forthcoming to lay against Sharpset's lot, in a small way, and all that could be got was quietly picked up before-



hand. Here, as in the Calédonian Cup, a great number of dogs were entered, and it took generally three, if not four, days to run it off. When the meeting came on, and the members met for the dinner and draw, the betting became heavier, and the friends were able to invest a good sum at long odds; for the general opinion was that Sharpset's bitch would go down before the favourite, Dark Eye, in the first round, as they were drawn together. In the first course Mr. Nightingale's Cap came off for an undecided, but at their next attempt he shouted 'Brindle' as he rode back, and told inquirers that she had just won, but with nothing to spare. Still they laid odds against her in the second round, remembering what a 'bucketing' she had gone through, and done double duty as well; but once more the game bitch just pulled through. The next day she had a less formidable antagonist to meet, and won easier in her first course, but came in for a regular 'grueller' in the second, with one of the stoutest hares ever seen; however she ran it gamer than ever, and, as the Parson said, the farther she went the better she went. Other dogs came out stiff, tired, and sore; but she only appeared to run herself into form, and at the end of the meeting went away from her opponents, and did pretty much as she liked with her hares, unless they were very stout indeed, until the final course arrived, when they laid odds on, instead of against, her.

'What shall we do?' said the Captain. 'Stand it out? We have landed a bit over every course so far, let alone what we have on for the Cup.'

'Stand to your guns like a man!' answered the Parson. 'Lay the odds as long as any one will take them. It's the Bank of England to a hen's egg!' And so it was, for Maybloom led Quickstep, who ran her up from start to finish in the final, and never gave her a chance. So the Bibblington Cup was won.

'Get the bitch away as quick as you can, old boy,' said the Parson, 'and start her home to the North, lest the old adage come true of "the cup and the lip." We can't quite afford that, you know.'

So Judy was soon in her Northern home again, and if her owner did wonder at her slightly altered appearance, he had very *substantial* reasons for believing she had only been away to try a lot of saplings. The Captain drew his money, and much astonished all who knew him by refusing many very large offers to sell his bitch. 'So unlike him!' as people said. He, however, sold all his other greyhounds by auction on the strength

of her victory, and realised large sums for them ; gave up his cottage, and, it was said, went on the Continent for his health ; came back with an heiress, and settled down as a substantial country gentleman. A good living in his, or rather his wife's, gift, falling vacant shortly afterwards, went to his friend the Parson, as a matter of course ; but I never heard that, when the chums were relating tales of ' auld lang syne ' and the exploits of their past days, they ever told any one how the Bibblington Cup was won and their fortunes made. Neither, I believe, did Mrs. Sharpset ever hear the story.

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## A MIDSUMMER MEET AT A FOXHOUND SHOW.

*By* CUTHBERT BRADLEY.



ULLO, Digby, my boy !—what have you been doing lately ?' said Captain Neville, late Dragoon Guards, as the young fellow so addressed entered the smoking-room of the Racing Club.

' Oh, usual thing—Epsom and Ascot !' replied young Digby, throwing himself into an arm-chair.

' Good things were rather scarce, eh !' said the Captain, eyeing him at an angle of 45°.

' One or two dead certainties never came off, which was rather a blow for backers,' rejoined young Digby, as he lighted a cigar. He had been unlucky lately on the turf, and the Captain put his questions with a purpose.

The London season was at its height, and a tropical sun was beating down on the heads of those who were, fortunately or unfortunately, obliged to endure it. But in the smoking-room of the Racing Club the contrast was great. A subdued light and perfect ventilation made the room feel positively cool ; while gorgeous flunkies, moving noiselessly about with brandies and sodas, added to the luxury. In one of the comfortable chairs sat Captain Neville, a middle-aged man, with a good port-winey complexion, and a heavy, military moustache ; he was attired in cool-looking light grey, with a faultlessly got-up white waistcoat, set off by the red carnation in his button-hole. He was considered an astute man of business and a worldly-wise one,

whose advice and society were sought by younger men. His name was mixed up in many and varied adventures; he was rife with speculation; but his *forte* was buying and selling horses.

The Richard Digby, already introduced, was fourth son of Charles Digby, and heir to an impoverished estate in the South of England. Unfortunately, being a man with small means, he was, as is generally the case, bent upon pleasures which require large resources for their enjoyment. But nature had given him a well-chiselled face, and a good figure, and he was a *beau-idéal* of a young man about town.

'Well, Dick, my boy!' pursued the Captain, 'come and do the Midland Counties' Foxhound Show with me next Friday!'

'You are rather rough on a fellow,' drawled young Digby. 'I've been going fast enough "to the dogs" lately without being expected to patronise a dog show!'

'Foxhounds don't come under that category at all,' replied the Captain, speaking in hunting metaphor; 'they go the pace but do not run "riot" or overdraw their banks.'

'Foxhounds be anathematised! I'd as soon go to a poodle show!' said young Digby.

'Take your licking and don't squeal,' was the Captain's rejoinder. 'There's business to be done, however, at this summer meet of foxhounds!'

'What! lay odds on the chance of that promising puppy you walked three seasons ago?' said Digby.

'No, my boy! not book-making this time, but horse-dealing—that is, if you are still disposed to part with your old chestnut horse, Jupiter,' replied the Captain mysteriously.

'I don't quite see how selling old Jupiter to a hungry pack of foxhounds is going to retrieve my fortunes, unless they pay a very high price for food for these well-bred epicures. I am afraid it would have no more effect with my creditors than the act of chucking the baby out of the sledge to the pack of wolves had to the remaining occupants.'

'Logic, dear boy!' rejoined the Captain with an aggravating smile. 'You, like the fond parent of the baby, will have to adopt extreme measures if you have any idea of hunting next season.'

'Well, a man cannot, I suppose, expect to live at the rate of two or three thousand a-year for long if his income be comparatively nothing!' moralised young Digby, who, until the present

moment, had never quite realised the critical state of his affairs ; 'and-I certainly have overrun the constable lately.'

'There's an end to the length of every one's tether, unless he can raise the wind in time,' said the Captain, who saw that he had set Digby's brain working, and that thus there was a chance of rousing him to energy in time to avert disaster.

'Well, let's put up the chaff and have the corn,' said poor Digby. 'I can't afford to hunt, I admit. What would you advise me to do?'

'Since you put it that way,' replied the Captain, leisurely blowing a cloud of smoke into the air, 'I should say, hunt by all means, even at the expense of some one else.'

Young Digby said nothing, but looked straight at the Captain. Like a young horse that has found that it is no use fighting for its head he gave in, and devoted all his attention to what the Captain might be about to say to him, for he knew it would be advice worth having, inasmuch as the Captain was not given to idle words. Neville, seeing he had his headstrong young colt well in hand now, ready and willing to be driven, promptly divulged his plans.

'As I said before, come with me to the Midland Counties' Foxhound Show, where you will be sure to meet with old Buffles, who has just purchased the Flareaway hounds with which you hunted last season. He rides nearly twenty stone, and is a nervous horseman. I am buying horses for him, up to weight and quiet, and want your old chestnut, Jupiter, for one. But this is the point which will most interest you. Buffles (who is a millionaire) has two hard-riding daughters who will require some one to pilot them over a strange country. You will possibly meet them at this foxhound show, and while you ingratiate yourself, I will talk to the old boy about your chestnut horse ; and I'll wager a buck-rabbit's scut to a foxhound's stern that you'll get a comfortable berth for your hunting next season, as the pilot of old Buffles' fillies, and——'

'Good business, Captain Neville !' exclaimed young Digby ; 'a thousand thanks, my dear Sir !'

'Don't mention it, my dear boy ! We'll meet next Friday at the fox-hound show, and I don't think we shall draw blank.'



## PART II.

The popular annual fox-hound show, held under princely patronage, in the Midlands, ranks amongst the first in the kingdom. Year by year more kennels are represented, the circle of its influence grows wider, and M. F. H.'s from John o' Groats to the Land's End begin to recognise its importance, and see that it forms a popular adjunct to a fox-hunting country; giving hunting men an opportunity of meeting during the summer months to discuss the merits of the best hounds in the country.

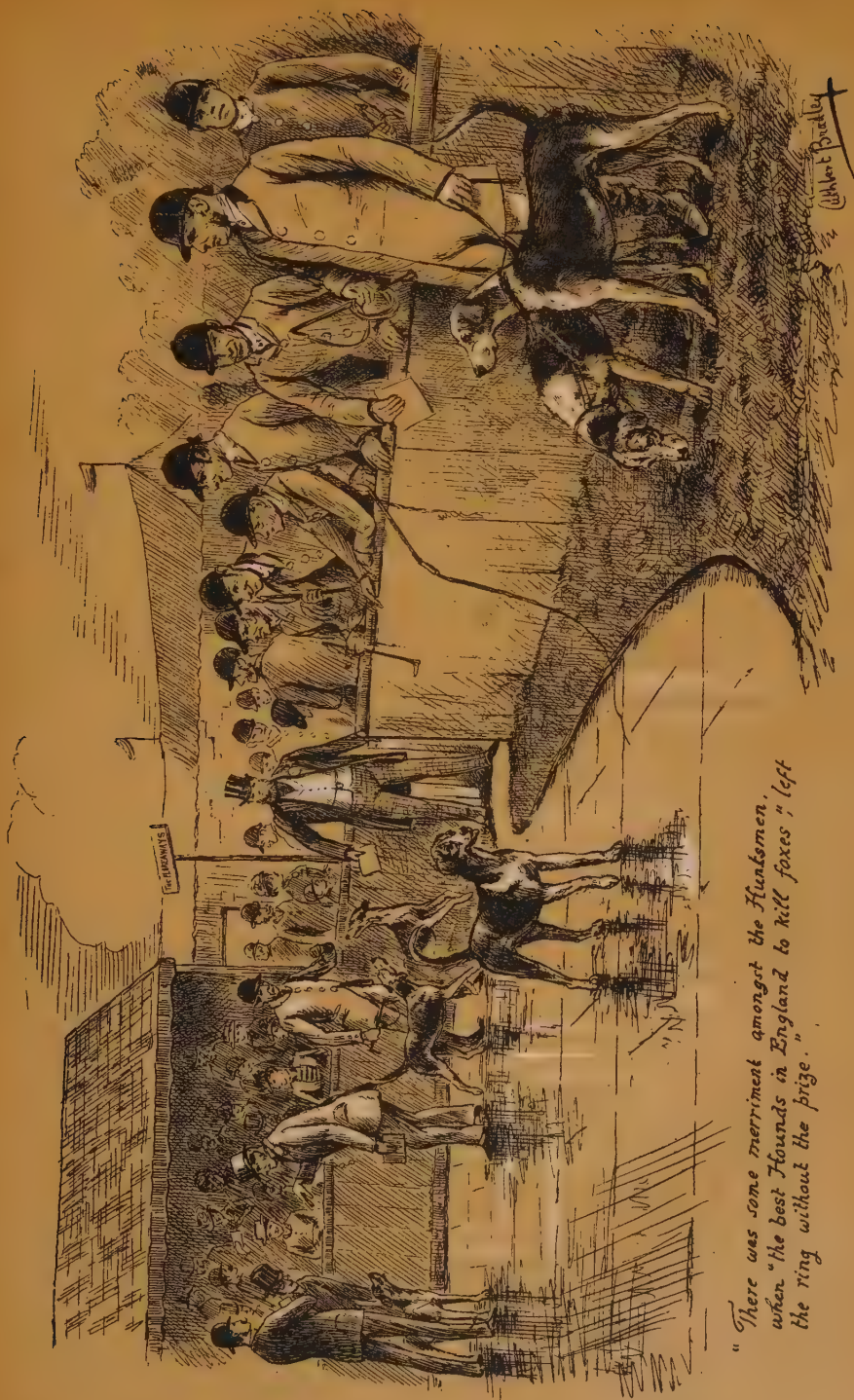
These shows are always well attended, and closely packed round the judging-ring may be seen the various characters one meets in the hunting-field, although somewhat disguised by their summer attire. Masters of Foxhounds are to be seen in close conversation, and many of the fair sex, who can hold their own across country when hounds run their hardest, are seated in the gallery. A 'special' from town brings several who have laid aside the garb of the park for a far more comfortable one of tweed. Sporting farmers, and, of course, their wives and daughters, are well represented. 'They wouldn't miss a hound show! No, not for a consideration!'

There in the judging-ring is the portly form of the Duke of —, a grey hat knowingly tilted on his nose, his hair brushed forward over his ears, and a smiling face set off by a dark-blue tie. He stands arm-holeing his waistcoat, or plunging both hands, with catalogue, into the capacious pockets of a loose-fitting grey coat, as, lost in thought, he contemplates the form of each competitor.

His colleague, the Marquis of —, a tall military man in tweeds, with light sandy hair and moustache, grey eyes, and firmly-compressed mouth, gets quickly to business, as he fixes the attention of the ever-restless hounds. Noting their points, he refers to the catalogue, affirms the information therein by a word with the huntsman, and then lounges up to the side, and, with folded arms, awaits the decision of the smiling Duke.

The third acting in the capacity of judge is a grey, wire-haired, cleanly-shaven, ferret-looking man, in silk hat and white spats, but having no handle to his name, he plays second-fiddle to the aristocrats.

The other one within the sacred precincts of the judging-ring is the Alderman of the borough, who, all white waistcoat, is



"There was some merriment amongst the Huntsmen, when "the best Hounds in England to kill foxes" left the ring without the prize."

Alfred Bradley



'active and assiduous in helping forward the arrangements,' as the local newspapers say.

'Let in the Oakley!' says the Marquis.' 'Keep 'em up, Goodall!' says the Duke; as Will with his whip takes his darlings into the corner on the grass, and gently flicks the noses of the inquisitive Oakleyites who have just been uncoupled, and turns from the judges to talk to the Pytchley in the corner. 'Bridesmaid! Bridesmaid! Good beetch, Wo-bine! Wo-bine! Bring Grace-ful forrard, Jim!'

The bitch-hounds are being judged, and the little ladies trot about round the ring, waving their sterns, looking up to their huntsman, who is yoicking and coaxing with bits of biscuit. Each little lady is handled in turn, and stands planted like a rock during the ordeal of comparison on the flags, with a thoughtful expression on her long tan features, contrasting with the excited look on the hard-bitten, weather-stained countenance of her huntsman, as he answers the inquiries of the judge, 'Dam? old Rosamond, my Lord—sister to Rectitude, out of the old beetch, Hac-tress (Actress).

In the grass enclosure by the judging-ring are about a dozen huntsmen and whips in bright hunt-liveries, with hounds in couples waiting to go before the judges. All seem stamped with the same hard-bitten, weather-stained countenance, and from the doggy expression on their faces one could swear that they were huntsmen, even if disguised in 'mufti;' but there is variety in some of the battered forms. You see the little tunkey, thick-set, bow-legged huntsman, and by his side is the smart, straight-riding, young huntsman, 'Jimmy,' in his new scarlet with the white collar. He stands arching his black eyebrows, and chatting over the rails with some of the old Cottesmore friends.

'How do, Jimmy?'

'Noicely, thank yer! how are they all doing your way?'

There was some merriment amongst the huntsmen watching the judging when the Alderman intimated to the huntsman of the Flareaways that they were expected to leave the ring without being awarded the prize, 'the best hounds in England to kill foxes too!'

And amongst the company gathered here is John Buffles, the new master of the Flareaway hounds, who is being button-holed by Captain Neville, while young Digby is 'forcing the pace' with the two pretty daughters.



John Buffles, Esquire, had lately purchased the Flareaway hounds from Lord —, who had met with a serious hunting accident at the end of last season—his horse jamming him against a tree. The new mastership was considered a good thing for the country, as the newcomer was speedily discovered to be wealthy and liberal, and furthermore, as an agricultural improver, his name was known in connexion with short-horns. Of late he had amassed enormous wealth through lucky speculations, and with it an ambition to own fox-hounds. Having taken to saddle exercise late in life, he was no great horseman; and this, coupled with a growing tendency to increase in weight, prevented his ever being anywhere with the first flight. But a liberal purse will cover many shortcomings in a master of fox-hounds, as in others; and a hard-riding huntsman and two smart whips made the pace good, as well as the sport.

Young Digby soon came to the conclusion that Nelly and Gracie Buffles (just out of their teens) were two charming girls, and with every advantage that money and position could give them. Gracie was undoubtedly pretty; but Digby was not afraid of beauty, nor was he affected with shyness; and after a few well-timed observations was able to discover the topics of conversation that interested her most. He avoided falling into the fatal error of imagining that because a girl is clever in anything particular she cares to be bored to death by talking about it. He therefore avoided starting with the subject of the hunting field—especially as he knew that the Captain was making the running in that direction for him with the M. F. H.

At one o'clock in the huge tent the twenty or thirty huntsmen sat together at lunch in the midst of some five or six hundred more sombrely clad people, young Digby made the wants of his two fair companions his special care. He did his best to procure the orthodox-shaped forks for them, as the difficulty of eating peas on a fork with three straight prongs is considerable and dangerous when you are not used to it. The *menu* at this agricultural show lunch was substantial and plentiful. There were huge cold salmon and lobsters, beef (loins, ribs, rumps spiced) lamb (fore quarters and hind quarters), ducks and fowls, pies (pigeon and veal), and then there were all kinds of smart looking sweets. But this *al-fresco* lunch was very good fun, and the girls laughed a good deal at the manœuvres to procure clean plates, the superhuman efforts of the unlucky individual sitting opposite a joint, the popping of corks, the christening of the

prize cups, and the speeches after lunch, with the yeomanry band outside the tent playing a breakdown between each speech, and the 'who-whooping!' of the five-and-twenty huntsmen, when hunting phrases were interlarded into speeches.

The thing to do after lunch is to walk round the temporary kennels at the back of the show ring. Here all the hounds are kennelled in pens, duly labelled with the names of the hunt. They are large wire-fronted canvas-backed cages, well strawed down, and the occupants lie dreaming in them, or solemnly look out, grumbling at their enforced captivity.

'Are you fond of foxhound music, Mr. Digby?' said Miss Gracie Buffles, casting a bewitching glance from under the brim of a very 'chic' straw hat, as an old hound threw his tongue.

'Awfully! 'Tis music that deserves a good run,' replied young Digby with ready wit.

'Gracie and I,' continued the elder sister, 'intend to try and make papa draft the hounds and get a variety of notes, so as to make the pack in harmony!'

'In fact, make quite a woodland choir of it,' added Digby, inwardly wondering what old Tom the huntsman would think of this new petticoat interference.

'Yes,' replied the two girls, 'we've thought it all out—we should have some big hounds with deep, solemn mouths, for basses.'

'They'd do also for woodland hunting, too,' said Digby.

'Then some roaring, loud-ringing mouths, for counter-tenors, with some hollow sweet mouths to bear the middle parts,' continued Gracie.

'The lady-pack would take those parts.'

'And,' continued the elder sister, putting the finishing touch to the choir, 'we should have one or two beagles to make the treble warble.' She had evidently been studying the *Sportsman's Directory*, though where the poor beagles would be at the end of a long run it is difficult to say.

'But there seems no part in the choir for poor Jack terrier to take,' said young Digby, falling in with the humour of the two girls.

'Oh!' said Gracie, 'terriers are such horribly independent little dogs that they must take their own parts.'

Here papa Buffles turned to young Digby, as they came in front of the cage containing the three couple of hounds from his newly purchased pack of the Flaraways.

'Be-be-beauties—arn't they?'

'Capital hounds,' said Digby; 'regular flyers!'

'Quality, my dear sir—quality! that's what I look at,' continued old Buffles.

'Good morning, Tom!' said the Captain, turning to the huntsman. 'I was looking for your ribbons!' (The huntsmen of the winning packs wore the blue-and-red ribbons in their button-holes.)

'We shall get our ribbons in three months' time, when the frost has nipped the trees a bit,' said the natty huntsman, doffing his cap.

'Yes, Tom,' said the Captain, lowering his voice; 'it's the old blood the judges are giving all the prizes to to-day!'

'They wouldn't look at our lot,' continued the huntsman, who was glad of sympathy; 'and they are the best pack in England to kill foxes!'

'That's where it is, Tom; but 'twixt you and me and that gate-post, judging the quality of foxhounds in a show-yard is first-class tomfoolery.' Such was the Captain's opinion on the subject, or rather such was the comfort he offered the huntsman.

'Tom,' said the new M. F. H., addressing his huntsman, 'just show Mr. Digby, Fair-play.

'That's Far-play, sir! always gay and well forrard. He's out of old Festive—you well remember Festive, sir? Naithan! Naithan! he's out of Notable, bred by the H'earl. She comes of the old Tarquin line!'

'Let's see Dashwood out in the open,' said Digby. 'I remember him as a pup at walk with Captain Neville four seasons ago: he *was* a young rascal in those days!'

'Oh! do tell us about him,' said Gracie: 'I do like mischievous puppies so!'

'Get him out, Tom: let's see what he has grown into!' said the M. F. H.

The huntsman sidled into the cage, barring the entrance with his boot; and singling out Dashwood, slipt the whip-thong round him and lugged him out.

Then the new M. F. H. tilted his hat on to his nose, shut one eye, and pointing with two fingers, noted the points of a real good four-season hound.

'Oh!' said Gracie, 'he don't look at all mischievous now—he's more like a judge!'

‘That’s due to our dosing him with Malacca cane: it’s an inevitable cure for youngsters,’ said Digby.

The Captain stepped forward to renew his acquaintance with his quondam puppy, and clipt the firm muscles of his back, pronouncing him ‘the sort to carry away in your eye.’ ‘He’s a deeper hound than his sire, and he’s well set on his legs, but he’s a wee bit low behind the shoulders.’ And now as Dashwood collides with a representative of a rival pack, the M.F.H. catches hold of him by the stern, the whip bundles him back into the cage, while the others bristle up, grumbling and growling with jealousy.

After the sights of the show-yard had been exhausted, there remained very little more to be seen. So all sensible people wended their way to the railway-station to catch the five o’clock express to town.

The Captain and young Digby escorted the two Miss Buffles to the station, whilst their worthy papa, being in a stew about his hounds, held a long conversation with Tom as to how they were to leave the yard with bag and baggage in time to get back to the kennels that night in the heart of Loamshire.

‘You know the country, Mr. Digby, that papa has taken?’ said Gracie, as they walked together to the station.

‘I’ve ridden across some of it,’ said Digby modestly.

‘It takes some getting over—doesn’t it?’

‘Yes,’ replied Digby. ‘It don’t do to stop riding a minute with the Flareaways, for they are a fast pack, and you do not see them again if you get left behind.’

‘Well, anything is better than woodland hunting,’ said Gracie; ‘where one goes up Tilton Wood, and down Tilton Wood, and through Tilton Wood, then away from Tilton Wood, and back again to Tilton Wood, and most likely finish at Tilton Wood! What could be more odious?’

‘Oh, I don’t think you need fear many days like that with the Flareaways,’ said Digby. ‘With your musical pack chorusing in cover, they’ll soon have a fox a-foot, and then for that most popular piece, “The hunt gallop.”’

‘Oh,’ said Gracie, innocently, ‘that’s all very well, but partners are necessary for a gallop!’

‘If a pilot might hope to be considered a partner, then may I ask for the pleasure of the next gallop?’ said Digby, gallantly.

Gracie dropped her head; and of course the rest of the



conversation to the railway-station was not exclusively about fox-hunting. Therefore we refrain to print it in these pages.

The sequel to this sketch was a note from John Buffles, M. F. H., to young Digby the following day, and was to the effect that he would have much pleasure in seeing Mr. Digby's chestnut horse, which Captain Neville had informed him was likely to suit; and, 'unless Mr. Digby had already made arrangements for next hunting season' (Digby smiled and thought of his overdrawn banking account), 'shall hope to see him with the Flareaway hounds, and trust he will make Buffleton Towers his hunting-box.'

The trial of the chestnut horse, Jupiter, proved satisfactory, and his late owner soon followed on a visit to Buffleton Towers, which resolved itself into a satisfactory arrangement to stay the winter and act as pilot with the Flareaway hounds to the two Miss Buffles.

Old Tom the huntsman was delighted, for Digby was popular, and rode straight.

'Ope you are quite well, sir! I must congratulate you, sir! It will seem like old times to have you back with us, sir!'

'Thank you, Tom. I'm looking forward to the hunting season. But how do you like your new master?'

'Well, sir, he come down to the kennels, and he talks sensible—at least, the few words he do say stand for something,' said the old huntsman, who received new-comers with distrust.

'Well, he's liberal, and that's a great thing for the old country!' replied Digby.

'Oh, yes, sir! he's got a heart as big as a bullock's!' said Tom, sardonically: he could never quite forgive his new master for having won his laurels with short-horns.

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'Well, my boy,' remarked Captain Neville in an undertone to Digby, as he met him one day in the following July with his young and pretty wife in Rotten Row; 'you don't regret now having attended the meet of hounds on the flags at the Midland Show?'

## THE TRAINER'S DAUGHTER.

*By 'A TURFITE.'*

**D**RAW your chair in a little closer,' said Squire Hornbeam, as we sat together in the old-fashioned dining-room of Hornbeam Hall. 'This is not a night, I can tell you,' he continued, as he raised the tongs and clapped on another piece of coal from the scuttle, 'for a man to feel afraid of the fire.'

In truth it was not, for the wind was by times whistling, and moaning, and howling, and every now and then a loud rumbling noise was heard, telling of the passage of a slate removed by the storm from the roof. Now and then the sleet and rain were heard whistling and sputtering on the panes of the windows, on what a sailor would call the weather-side, and the old Squire would give an uneasy squirm and say, 'I wish my wife and Polly were safe home. They must have had a longish run, or they would have been home by this time; and I know that if they were once fairly started nothing would keep them from seeing the end of it. Dockwoods Gorse! Let me see,' he said taking down the little case of Lord Pennant's fixtures. 'Well, they would try Nevermail Wood, and if they didn't find there they'd go on to Clinksby, and if they found at Clinksby he'd take them right over the hills, out of all civilisation. Gad, Sir! I know what it is to come home on a night like this. I once walked the last ten miles through a snow-storm, leading a lame horse, with the rein under my arm and my hands in my pockets. I do wish, indeed, they were both here. They've nobody with them, for Johnstone's mother (my groom Johnstone) was buried to-day, and my wife—considerate soul!—said, "Oh, never mind; we're only going to the meet, and then going to ride home." I wish they had. But help yourself to a little whisky-and-water, and I'll tell you all about Nimble Ned's Grand Imperial that you said you have often heard your father talk about. Yes, I *rode* him; he was quite right. I remember the day as if it were but yesterday. Nimble Ned! Ah, see, there's his near fore-hoof plate and all, on the mantlepiece. Hang me! I must hide it; it gives me the

heartache every time I see it. Ay, ay, poor old Ned ! And to think of your father and me driving home to our hotel together in the same trap that night, and the night of it afterwards we made of it, and him *dead*, and me sitting here with a gouty foot talking to his son ! Gad, Sir ! it's a queer world, isn't it ? But you don't know. Mark me, you'll be old before you know where you are !'

'Yes, yes, Squire ; don't remind us too much of that. What about Nimble Ned ?'

'Nimble Ned by Uncle Ned out of Up-and-be-Doing. Ay, that was it. Ay, my lad, I won more than the Grand Imperial with that horse. But I'll tell you all about it ; if my wife were here you wouldn't get a chance. So get your chair a little closer, and stick your grog on the mantelpiece. Ugh ! what a night it must be ! And my poor wife and my own little girl Polly out in it, too ! Never mind, they're not the milk-and-water sort they rear in the conservatories now-a-days.

'Well, then, Nimble Ned, that your poor father used to tell you about, away out in those infernal backwoods or prairies he bolted to, after he had lost well-nigh everything, belonged to old Jack Staines, the Master of the Tyke and Pigstye, the man who "blooded" me, and a right good old sort he was. Ned had carried him well in many a good thing ; he could stay like a young lady in a milliner's shop, as the saying goes, and there was nothing with the Tyke and Pigstye that could compare with him for speed. He was an out-and-out good one, clever at his fences, and fond of them ; and, says old Jack to me one day, "Look here, young Hornbeam, I want you to ride Ned. He's a rare good sort to feel under one, but if you don't mind we'll just change mounts, for I should like to see how he looks when he's going."

"With all my heart, Mr. Staines," says I, and in five minutes afterwards I was on Ned, and he was on Mill Stream, a big, slow-moving old horse, but a rare jumper. Well, as luck would have it, we got hold of a good, game, straight-necked fox very early in the day, and had about thirty minutes of it at regular steeplechase pace. Mill Stream kept close to me for a time, but I could not wait for him, nor did old Jack ask me. "Go on, Hornbeam ! send him on," he said : "he'll do." When the hounds pulled down their fox in the open I was almost done, and Ned as fresh as a daisy ; and, to cut this bit of my story short, old Jack says, when he trots up, "Hornbeam, you might do more unlikely things than win the Grand Imperial with that horse. That horse, Nimble

Ned, goes into training this very week." Well, as soon as he said that I might win the Grand Imperial, I began to think of nothing else. I had ridden several winners at little petty hunt and military gatherings, and was voted "an improving young 'un," but I always thought—for I was but a lad—that these great races that I had read of in the papers were far beyond a simple Squire's son. That's always the way with young fellows till they begin to find that men are made of the same stuff pretty well nigh the country over. It was a compliment, too, for I could not help thinking that Mr. Staines, who was one of the best horsemen and judges of horsemen in the country, should ask me to show him how his best horse could go. Ay, better than that, that he should say "*I might win the Grand Imperial on him!*" Bygad, Sir! I could not sleep for thinking of it. Harry Hornbeam win the Grand Imperial! Help yourself to the whisky-and-water! Good Heavens! what a night it is! I hope they're not blown away. Likely enough they'll have gone into old Saker's—Colonel Saker's—for shelter, and he'll no doubt send them home all right.

'Well, Nimble Ned was sent off to be got ready for the Grand Imperial. There was to be no preliminary feeler with him at the United Chawbacons' Annual. "No, no," said old Jack Staines, "it's the Grand Imperial he must go for right off." Where he was being trained, or by whom, he never let me know; and all that I knew was that he appeared first in the list of entries, next in the list of weights, with eleven stone, and then in the list of acceptances. In the betting he figured amongst the 100 to 1 list, and in a table of horses in training he was marked "Private."

'Old Jack never mentioned Nimble Ned to me, and any one of the field who ventured to ask him received some such reply as "In training? Lord bless you, no! I'm fattening the old rogue for the hounds."

'Well, all the time I was in a fever about the "between the flag" business. Hang me if I didn't think steeplechasing, wink steeplechasing, dream steeplechasing, and wake up steeplechasing! I rode the Aintree course in my mind's eye five times a-day, and I must have galloped over it twice that number of times at night. It was not till the week after I had been down to Cricklevale, where there was a little cross-country meeting, and had picked up two good stakes on Blacksmith, an old black gelding, and got complimented in *Bell's Life* on my



riding, that old Jack Staines comes up to me and says, "Well done, young Hornbeam! I'm glad for the sake of the old Tyke and Pig Styke that you showed 'em the way on the old black. Now I'm going to be as good as my word; but you mustn't breathe it. *No* babbling, *no, no*, to Tom, Dick, or Harry, nor anybody. I want you to steer Nimble Ned in the Grand Imperial: there, don't say a word." Well, I felt mighty nervous after all this, thinking about it and dreaming about it, and didn't know what to say. He fairly took my breath away, and all I managed to gasp out was, "Where have you got him, Sir?" "That's just what I am going to let you know. Nimble Ned is about 300 miles from this, in a district where fox never was hunted, and where nobody knows a good one when they see him. He is trained by an old friend of mine, Joe Marsden—honest Joe Marsden, whose father was a large mail-coach contractor before steam came in. Joe used to take a turn at driving, and many a happy day and night I have had with him. But driving was not his *forte*, so much as breaking and making a good hunter; and in training one for the old-fashioned system of steeplechasing there's not a fellow with better hands or head than old Joe living, and he's the softest-hearted man in the world. He married the governess at Clare Castle, as fine a woman as ever breathed; but she died shortly after she had given him a daughter, who is alive, I believe; and he flew out of the rut of everything lively, and took a farm away down on the Carlisle border. There he amuses himself making a couple of hunters for me every year, and training at times a steeplechaser or two, though he never comes to see them run. Nothing now will drag him away from home. Now what I want you to do is to run down there and stay with him for a few days, so that you may ride the horse yourself, and get to know him. He's been pretty well schooled over a capital course, too; but Joe says that the one that rides him, though a better could not be found, will never be allowed to ride a steeplechase, *the father being dead against it*. Now when can you go?" says he. "At once," was my reply; but he said, "Oh, there's not so much hurry as that; but I'll write Joe, and tell him that you'll leave here on Monday morning, and get to Garnet Station—that's about seven miles from his place—at six at night. That's about the time the train's due there: but he will know, and have some one to meet you." Well, that day I did what I never did before: I turned roadman, and wouldn't

jump a fence. Some folks actually thought I was funkig; but it wasn't that. The fact was, that I was afraid of meeting with the slightest accident which might prevent my riding the horse in the Grand Imperial. Was I qualified? Yes. I was a member of the Junior Buff, and that's as good as being elected gentleman-rider, or the same thing. But! bless me! what a night it is! I hope they are not both blown away. Don't spare the grog so much on a night like this. Your father wouldn't have done it!

'Now, let me see. I was booked to go to Garnet Station, and ride Nimble Ned; and on Monday morning old Jack Staines saw me off. "Mind to let me know what you think of the horse as soon as you have ridden him, but write to nobody else. If he wins, you'll have a nice little money on at the market odds. You needn't be in a hurry to get back, either. Stay if you like till the horse is boxed for Aintree, and stick to him. Joe Marsden is sure to make you comfortable, and learn you a lot you don't know beside." Well, to make my story a bit shorter, I got down to Garnet Station about six o'clock, and, with my portmanteau in my hand, made my way to where I had seen a trap drawn up just outside the platform. I gave up my ticket, went through the little gate, and found myself alongside a kind of breaker's cart, in which was a great, big, raw-boned colt, with an undocked tail, and a lovely girl in a hunting-cap and neat overcoat driving. This was more than I calculated for, and so I blustered out, in a most ungallant manner I'm afraid—"Is this from Mr. Marsden's?" "Yes," was the sweet reply. "I presume you are Mr. Hornbeam?" I was never of much account with the girls, there having been none in our family, and few girl cousins, and I felt as awkward as an English five-year-old at an Irish bank. I had half a mind to bolt for the train, which had just commenced to move off, when I took heart and looked up. Yes, there she was, with the sweetest face you ever saw, smiling and making room for me by her side. I placed my portmanteau at her feet, and blundered up to the seat, saying something about "Mr. Marsden's daughter?" But I'm hanged if I recollect, nor do I think she could make out, what I said. However, we did get talking, and of course Nimble Ned was the subject. "I suppose you know the gentleman who has been riding him?" I ventured to remark. She took a side-look at me and laughed, and said, "Of course I do!" "He's a fair good horseman, I believe," I then ventured to remark again.

"Yes!" she said slowly, with another laugh, as she flicked the colt with the lash of the whip playfully: "I don't think you'll get more out of the horse than *he* can!" Well, I don't know what it was, but I felt savage—aye, savage with jealousy I did, though I had only seen her five minutes. "I'll punch this young fellow's head," I said to myself, for I pictured him some sort of clever boy not out of leading-strings, whose father was afraid of his risking his neck at Aintree. "I suppose you father, Miss Marsden, has got no tackle to try him with?" "Oh, yes! The gentleman will be on one which will go quite as well as Nimble Ned, but is not, maybe, so fast. You'll see to-morrow the gentleman who'll ride him against you!" This made me more savage than ever; but I said nothing, merely making a resolution that if Nimble Ned was at all like the horse he used to be I would soon take the conceit out of Mr. Jackanapes.

'We got a little freer in our conversation as we drove along, and when we arrived at Willowtree, which was the name of Marsden's place, all my awkwardness had gone, and I helped her down from the trap as gallantly as if I had been a ladies' man all my days. Her father I found just such a grand old fellow as old Jack Staines had described him to be, though almost doubled up with rheumatism. His first inquiries were naturally all about his old friend, and all these I had to answer before he would tell me anything about the horse.

'After one of those rich meat-teas such as they always give you in Border farm-houses when you arrive late—they dine, as a rule, about noon—he took me to the stables, where I saw my old favourite looking in the pink of health and condition, and with a coat that you could shave yourself at. I looked him all over and saw he was as fit as they could make horses for any engagement, and then he made me look at another, a great, big, raw-boned horse, with big joints, sound legs, and ragged hips. A good old-fashioned style of hunter of the useful but plain stamp. "That's old Post Horn," said he; "if he'd a little bit more speed there's nothing in the world can beat him. He'll give you a lead to-morrow, and you'll have all you can do to keep with him for the most of the way." "What about the gentleman that's going to ride him?" says I. Then I turned round, for I heard a laugh, and there was his daughter, looking more charming than ever, with her yellow hair unloosened and hanging all over her shoulders. "Oh, he'll be here to-morrow morning in good





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time," says the father; then they both laughed till I felt quite foolish.

'That night we sat up late in the old dining-room, talking about horses and coaches and famous whips of a bye-gone age, and the old gentleman gave me a sound, wholesome lot of advice in his nice, quite unconceited and gentlemanly way. Tired as I was I could have sat till daylight; but that was not to be, and I was soon courting sleep, in spite of my dreams of this hated rival that was to ride against me next morning.

'Well, next morning came and we breakfasted together, but no rival put in an appearance. Miss Marsden disappeared hurriedly, and getting hold of my whip and fastening on my spurs I followed the father to the stables; outside I found Nimble Ned already saddled, and in a few minutes a yokel led out Post Horn with a side-saddle on. "What!" I said; but I was not allowed to say more, for just then I was tapped on the back, and the old trainer said, "*Mr. Hornbeam! the gentleman that rides Nimble Ned at his work.*" Yes, by Jove! there, in the neatest of habits, surmounted by the same little hunting-cap in which I had seen her first, was my adorable. Her laugh when she saw my look of surprise I can never forget; in truth, I'm never *allowed*. Lord, what a night it is! keep your chair close to the fire, man. Did you hear the sound of horses' feet? I thought I did, but it's only some of the slates tumbling off the old place.

'Well then, to make a long yarn short, she took me over the course with that Post Horn at a rare pace; you never saw such hands, such style, such judgment, when about three miles had been covered, and we landed on the grass together I let Ned out, and he sailed up to where the old man stood as winning-post, for we had been riding in a circle, aye, as easy as he had been doing two miles over the flat. "We don't want any better work than this," I said proudly, for I felt as if I had weighed in all right for the Grand Imperial; but I think it's a thousand pities that the lady who has schooled the horse so well should not be allowed to ride him in his engagements. "Ha, ha!" was her own reply; "do you think you could get him qualified as a *gentleman* rider?"

'I wrote old Jack Staines that night, and he was backed for the race heavily next day. I was in no hurry home, but stuck with the horse till he won. By Jove! what a night that was with your father and——'

'And what about the lady who rode him in his gallops?'

Just as I spoke a door opened, and a young lady who did not see me slipped up behind his chair and placed a fox's brush round his eyes. She did not see me, I noticed, but when she did catch my eye was about to withdraw.

'Polly! Polly! my dear!' said the old man delightedly—'Mr. Dickson—my daughter Polly. Eh, and so you killed him did you?' he said delightedly. 'And who gave you this, eh? I thought you were lost in the storm, eh! And your mother, where is she, eh?'

'Here, Harry, here, you lazy old man!' was the exclamation from the lobby, and a cherry-faced little lady, the very image of the girl, entered the room.

'Mr. Dickson—my wife. Now you were asking about the lady who schooled Nimble Ned; well, you have been introduced. Mr. Dickson—Mrs. Hornbeam.'

Mrs. Hornbeam was the trainer's daughter.



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# FORE'S

## SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

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### SPORTING ADVENTURES.

By 'SYKO' (A BULL TERRIER).



SINCE I last wrote down some of my jottings for *Fores's Sporting Notes and Sketches* I have been having a very good time of it; I might almost say, the jolliest time any dog ever had. First of all, I've been introduced to quite a new kind of sport, and to a dog of my age and experience that's something rather out of the common: it is capital fun, too, this new sport, and later on I'll tell you all about it. Secondly, I've been laughing fit to split my sides: some people think we dogs don't laugh, but that only shows their ignorance. Aha! if some of you men only knew how much, and how often, we are moved with the 'inextinguishable laughter of the gods' at your acts of folly, I'm afraid your sticks and our ribs would be more intimately acquainted than they are!

Good gracious! when I think of it, what fools you men are to be sure! Lots of you, who've quite as many bones to gnaw as are good for you, who have the means of obtaining plenty of sport, a good kennel over your heads, and every sort of enjoyment in a quiet way; not satisfied with what you've got, chuck it all away, in the vain hope of grabbing at something bigger, or of making other men think you are a 'mastiff' when you are only a 'poodle;' or else deliberately throw away the substance for the shadow, like the 'dog' in the fable. It is a good thing, by the way, they call it a fable, for I am certain no 'dog' would ever be such a fool as to throw away a good big lump of meat in order to seize the shadow of it; no, a man might have done it, and often does do it, but a dog—never!

But this isn't laughing, is it? No! what I've been laughing at lately is my very much-loved, if not much-respected, master. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I've seen him through his calf-love, or

loves, and roared at his despair, while philosophically waiting to see him 'off with the old love and on with the new,' which, to do him justice, he was never long doing. I've seen him respectably married, and settle down to put on the respectable corporation of a married citizen; and now, to think that I should have lived to see him sweating round and round the garden of the house in a burning sun, covered with flannels, in the attempt to get back to the weight of other days! And all for what? To ride a three-legged horse, in a three-legged race, in a very 'three-legged village' in France. He's done it though, and he's won it too, and now he is as proud as a peacock with a new tail. What an ass! Them's my sentiments, though perhaps it's a good thing he is not aware of them.

While I'm on the subject I may as well tell you about this wonderful race, or rather races. Well, to begin with: the redoubtable 'Gee,' the hero of the day as far as we were concerned—he was one of the decidedly 'has been' order. Poor old crock! he deserved a quiet and peaceful ending to a meritorious and honestly performed career. He had originally, I believe, made his bow to the public on the classic fields of Chantilly, La Marche, Auteuil, &c., where he had covered himself with glory, and put a large number of francs (I like to talk of money in francs, it sounds more) into his owner's pocket; but, alas! faster than he could pick up the francs his master poured them out on the fatal board of green cloth, with the never-failing result that he and his master's other effects soon fell into the hands of the 'Lost Tribes of the Children of Israel.' But, as if to show his generous contempt for their doings, no sooner did they put him to work again than he sprang a sinew, and was sold to a speculative and sporting subaltern of Hussars, whose property he now is, and, who being sent away on duty, handed him over, to be patched up, trained, and ridden by my master. Well, with the aid of fomentations, poulticing, bandaging, standing in water, &c., a sort of training was got through, and behold us arrived at the village of B——y, where the meeting was to be held.

The *raison d'être* of these small meetings in out-of-the-way parts of France are the trotting races, not in harness but mounted, for horses bred within a certain radius of the spot, and sired by stallions from the Government dépôts. These races are held with a view of encouraging the peasants and farmers to send their mares to the Government stallions, which 'serve'

at a very low fee, in order to improve the breed of horses in the country, and facilitate the finding of remounts for the cavalry—a most excellent system, and very ably carried out into the bargain. They are great fun, too, these races. The horses arrive on the scene of action harnessed, as often as not, to a good, big, old country cart, containing the owner, the jockey (*sic*), their respective sweethearts, and two or three other ladies, in case the gentlemen should find the monotony of one too much for them. They bring-to and unlimber like a battery of artillery going into action. A bundle of cloth with a rusty stirrup attached to each side of it is fished out of the depths of the vehicle, and clapped on the horse's back; the jockey, attired anyhow or nohow, clambers up, takes two or three turns of the clumsy and weather-beaten reins round his fists, and with a '*Hi! donc!*' and a kick in the ribs, ambles off to the starting-post. Once there he is very soon despatched on his journey, for they are not particular about a length or two, and off he goes as hard as he can, sitting nearer his horse's tail than any other part of him, and pulling hard all the way to keep him in a trot. As the winning horse passes the post the crowd display their approbation by a universal clapping of hands, which produces a very strange effect on ears accustomed to the roar of an English race-course. The winner goes to scale, and then comes the moment of his triumph. He is effusively and affectionately embraced by mothers, aunts, step-mothers, brothers, sisters, cousins, friends; and even some enthusiastic stranger passing by goes in for a share in the osculatory congratulations. When my master saw this he stood lost in amazement for some time, and at last came out with, 'By Jove! if I should win, I wonder if they'll want to kiss me?' Unluckily for him he gave vent to his feelings in French, and a very decided '*Jamais, Monsieur!*' was the prompt reply he got from a very pretty girl, who had overheard him. 'Got it that time!' he muttered, as he turned away to peel off his coat prior to throwing his leg across the old crock I've already told you about; for the event of the day, the steeplechase, was the next item on the card. The steeplechase-course was a very rough-and-ready concern, though perhaps more honestly deserving of its name than many of the cut-and-dried affairs at home. It was about a mile and a half round, part of it (about half a mile), a ploughed-up and harrowed track, about ten yards wide, running through crops of buckwheat and flax, with a



good run in on sound turf; the jumps were nearly all banks, some of them too big to be taken flying: two water-jumps, and a good stiff bit of timber besides, made up the number of 'obstacles.'

There were only five runners, not bad horses in their way, but sadly lacking in quality and condition; in fact, as regards the former, our 'Gee' was streets ahead of them: but then, to counterbalance this, remember he had only three legs and a 'swinger,' so that matters were pretty even. The starter was certainly the most polite of his class that I have ever seen, for he met his horses at the distance flag, took off his hat with a low bow, and escorted them, hat in hand, to the starting-post. Having got them there he inquired, with another bow, 'If the gentlemen would be so amiable as to let him know when they wished to start.'

The gentlemen accordingly got into some sort of a line, and started; the starter, lost in admiration at their quickness, gazed fondly after them for some time, and then suddenly remembering his onerous functions dropped his flag, and with another flourish of his hat cried, '*Allez, Messieurs!*' There was not much need to tell them that though, for the other amateurs, thoroughly determined that for the honour of France the Englishman should not be in front of them, at all events at the beginning of the race, were ramming along, some of them a good deal faster than their horses, a long way ahead of my master, who was cantering quietly along, nearly a hundred yards in the rear, waiting for his old horse to get warm. They went on for some distance in this order, with but little change, except that the old 'Gee' was moving better with every stride, while the leader was beginning to feel the effects of his furious burst of speed from 'off the mark.' Over the water they went, and then came on to the only nasty jump of the lot, a really big, awkward bank. Here a zealous official—a steward, I think—had posted himself, with the laudable intention of advising the jockeys how the bank was to be negotiated.

'*Pas trop vite! doucement, Messieurs!*' was his warning cry: advice which was promptly and unhesitatingly followed by the whole field, with the exception of my master, who came slipping through his horses; and with a 'Come up, you old beggar!' went flying over the 'obstacle' in question amid a volley of '*Sacrés!*' '*Mon Dieu's!*' '*C'est l'Anglais!*' &c., and was seen no more by his astonished rivals, for the old horse was now

thoroughly warmed to his work, and, stealing along at his ease, romped home an easy winner by about fifty lengths. Of course I was pleased, but I wasn't going to show any excitement over a little thing of this sort; so, although I felt sorely tempted to have a 'go in' at one or two of the foreign dogs I saw about, I contented myself with walking slowly past them, with bristles and stern up, just to show them I didn't care a snap for them.

Dear me! I have lately been looking at some back numbers of the papers, and I can't help thinking we dogs are far more patriotic than you men. So long as you get your own bread buttered on the right side you don't seem to care a scrap for your country; you patch up all your grievances, and gorge yourselves with humble pie, just in order to stay in your snug kennels a little longer. I can tell you one thing, though: other men's opinion of you has undergone a great change lately. Why, I can remember, some years ago, when I went abroad with my master pigeon-shooting, all the foreign dogs I met would show me every civility in their power, and the mere fact of being an 'English' dog was sufficient to ensure me considerably more than my share of whatever was going; whereas now I meet with nothing but sneers and contempt, and it is only by the vigorous use of my teeth that I have succeeded in convincing them that if English men have deteriorated English dogs have not. Take the advice of a dog, and if any one interferes with you show your teeth; and use them, too. But there, I expect Mr. Fores will say, 'I pay that brute to tell me about his sporting adventures, and don't want him to go "babbling and skirting" about what he doesn't understand,' so I'll get on with my story.

I was going to tell you about the new sport I had been entered to. If any of you want a real good day's sport, come and have a genuine, rough, hard day's boar-hunting. It isn't fox-hunting, of course; in fact, it is as different from the 'Sport of Kings' as chalk is from cheese; but, in its way, it is unapproachable. One day is very much like another, so when I've told you about this my first boar-hunt you will know pretty well what it is like.

There had been rumours afloat for some time that a gigantic boar had been seen and tracked in the adjacent forest of T——c. Fabulous stories were brought in by the peasants of his size and ferocity, and at last the *piqueur* of the local pack, when out at

exercise, came full on him, and with difficulty got his hounds off. It was then decided to have a grand muster of four packs, and to make a desperate attempt to account for the monster. *Couteaux de chasse* were sharpened ; all the arrangements completed ; and one morning we started by train, at 5 a.m., to the rendez-vous at T——c, some twenty miles distant. I don't suppose I had any business to go, but the evening before my master looked hard at me between the whiffs of his post-prandial cigar and said, 'Syko, old boy ! what would you say to a boar ?' Now, I didn't know what a boar was, but I wagged my tail to let him know that if it was any foreign beast I wouldn't disgrace myself ; and he understood me, for he replied, 'All right, my dog ! you shall go ;' and so I went with him. Hence this tale.

Well, we were not long getting to our destination. The horses and hounds were unboxed, and I had time to look about me ; and a right cheery sight it was. We were hardly out of the train before the *piqueurs* of the other three packs began to blow the *réveillée* in honour of our arrival ; and you can say what you like, but, be a horn short, or be it long and serpent-like, so long as it is a hunting-horn, there's a ring in its blast that lifts the cobwebs from your brain, drives away care and sorrow, and sets your heart leaping in your breast for joy. But, alas ! there is bitterness mingled with the sweetest things on earth ; and in the midst of the cheery greetings of the *chasseurs*, and while the music of the horn was still ringing in his ears, I saw a shadow steal over my master's face. I knew what it was. He was thinking of the short, deep blast of 'George's' horn, and of old friends far away in the great, wide pastures of ——shire ; but it was impossible to be unhappy long among the jolly, merry lot of officers and sportsmen assembled to greet us, so soon we were both of us as lively as any of them.

No sooner was the *réveillée* satisfactorily finished than the great brass horns boomed out the '*Départ pour la chasse*,' and this time eighty couple of great hounds, bigger than staghounds, took up the refrain. Think of that, ye sportsmen ! One hundred and sixty sonorous throats pealing forth the music you love best on earth ! Ye gods ! What a crash it was ! I was driven fairly wild with excitement, and, out of sheer joy and longing to do something, I laid hold of the nearest hound without the slightest idea of what I was about ; but I was promptly laid on my back, and a heavy thong curling round the tenderest part of my stomach brought me to my senses again, just as the

cavalcade set forth for the forest, which we soon reached, and the business of the day commenced.

Three out of the four packs were coupled up and sent off in charge of their *piqueurs*, and such sportsmen as liked to accompany them, to lay in wait as relays in the parts of the forest through which experience had shown that the boar was most likely to run when forced. The fourth pack was also coupled up as a temporary measure; while two couple of the big *limiers* were laid on to 'rouse the boar,' and tell us if the information of the *piqueurs* who had 'harboured' him (if one may borrow an expression from the noble stag and apply it to a pig) was correct. We were not long in suspense, for soon a long, solemn note, like the clang of some great bell, went echoing down the forest aisles as the veteran *limier* opened on the scent. Slowly but relentlessly and unhesitatingly the *limiers* pushed on, till at length a change in their 'music' denoted the presence of the grisly boar. A rushing, crashing sound was heard, and across a little clearing in the forest bounded the mighty pig. Instantly the hounds were uncoupled and the chase began, amid the terrific blasts of the huge brass horns, sounding first 'The Boar' and then the 'View,' mingled with the resonant notes of the whole pack in full cry. Wherever old Nimrod, the mighty hunter of old, lays buried, certain I am that his bones stirred in their grave for glee; sure I am that his was the spirit that thrilled each heart with the deep stern joy of the sport that he loved so well.

Shove your hat on your head if you like, and ram your feet home in the 'irons' if you will, but, long and stern as the chase will be, it's no good looking round to choose your place at the first fence, for the fastest horse and the stoutest fencer that ever crossed High Leicestershire would be useless here. No; you've got to take your chance in a desperately thick and endless forest; and, if you want to see anything of hounds, you must let your horse thread his own way among the trees. Interfere with him, and you'll probably smash your knee-cap, if you do nothing worse. Take care of your head if you can, and be ready to slip your leg well out on your horse's shoulders in front of the saddle at a moment's notice. It is no child's play you are in for to-day, neither for hound, nor horse, nor man, I can tell you.

My master was on a horse well-seasoned to this sort of work, and well he bore out the character given him by his genial owner as my master got into the saddle,—'Wherever a horse can go he



will take you ;' for sticking to him all day, as, of course, I did, I was fairly astonished to see him twisting in and out of big trees, dropping quietly down great rocky dips, and scrambling up the other side like a goat, and all the time pegging along at a sort of half canter, half 'lollop.' I can't think of any other word. But hark ! Far away in the distance echoes the horn from one of the relays ; again come the welcome sounds, 'The Boar,' followed by the 'View.'

I may as well explain here what this means.

In the huge forests in which hunting is mostly carried on in France, where it is often totally impossible to follow hounds or to have any idea of what they are doing, hunting would be totally impossible were it not for the aid of the big horns. There is a distinct call for every animal, besides calls for the 'View,' 'Check,' 'Casting,' 'Forrard,' 'Hitting off the scent' again, 'Changing forest ;' in fact, a complete sportsman's vocabulary : so that, even if lost in the forest, as frequently happens, directly any one catches sight or hearing of the hounds you know where they are and what they are doing. No sooner, then, had the 'relay' sounded the welcome news than we heard the voices of the fresh pack as they were laid on ; and, as luck would have it, they were turning our way. Crash, smash went the bushes, and, without taking the slightest notice of us, the boar burst from a thicket, foam dropping from his jaws, rage blazing in his small, wicked eye, and, rushing straight ahead, disappeared from view, followed by a lusty 'View halloo !' from my master—the first, I should think, that had ever echoed through the forest of T——c. Louder and clearer came the 'music' of the hounds, and in a few minutes the two packs came sweeping on in full cry right in the track of the boar. After them we went, my master and I, for no one else happened to be near them. Mile after mile did that wonderful horse make good his way through the most extraordinary places, always near the hounds, who, it must be said, were going almost at a trot most of the time, owing to the wet ground and bad scent, but nearly always giving tongue. But now the ground got so bad, and the trees so thick, that, clever as was his horse, my master had to get off and lead him carefully along for nearly half a mile, and we lost all sound of the hounds. However, one of the big horns sharp to our left told us something was going on, but this time the note was different. Luckily, we hit off a sort of beaten track in the wood. My master galloped along it in the direction of the sound, and was joined by nearly

all the other *chasseurs*, who told him that it meant that the boar was at bay (*au ferme*), and that they must try and get up to save the hounds. On we went as hard as we could, and at last heard the hounds close to us, a little on the right. In we went, through the bushes, and there was the boar, his back against a huge overhanging boulder, which almost formed a cave over him, two packs of great slashing hounds baying furiously round him, while his little wicked eye gleamed furiously, first at one and then at the other. Before anything could be done to stop them the nearest hound went in, but the boar was protected everywhere except in front. Three vicious twists of his bristly neck, three terrible stabs with his gleaming tusks, and two of the best hounds of the pack lay stretched in front of him, while a third lay terribly gashed and gasping. In vain did the Baron de B—— and Mons. F——, maddened at the loss of their hounds, attempt to get in with their *couteaux de chasse*, and more hounds would have been lost; when my master, who had gone round behind the boulders, which protected the boar, found a good-sized opening between two of them. ‘Here, Syko! Syko!’ he called. I was there in a second. ‘Leu in! Eleu in, my dog!’ I saw the hole, and went in like a shot. There was plenty of room, and, in less time than it takes to write this, I got such a hold of the boar’s hind-quarters as fairly made him wince, in spite of his size and pluck. There wasn’t room for him to turn on me, and I stuck to him like a leech. At last he could not stand it, and, with a great grunt of rage, he dashed out right through the hounds, ripping up two more as he went. On he went right through everything. An unfortunate horse that came in his way had his near fore-leg sliced to the bone as if by a razor; but I held on, till at last I got a bang against a tree that made every rib in my body feel as if it was broken, and I was forced to let go. The hounds were on again. A *piqueur* was left in charge of the wounded, and the chase swept on. I followed as well as I could. The end was at hand. Soon the fourth relay was thrown in, and the forest echoed with the mighty sound of eighty couple of hounds. Again the horns boomed out the ‘Bay.’ I hurried up, and found all the *chasseurs* trying in vain to force their way through a dense, impenetrable barrier of huge old thorns. I crept through, and was well rewarded for my pains. In front of me was a huge sheet of water, running up at one end into a creek some fifty yards wide. The boar and the whole of the hounds were in the water, and two of the latter, floating lifeless

on the surface, showed the struggle there had been sharp; and the boar had nearly reached the further shore, where he would have dealt out more destruction, but fortunately a charcoal-burner had heard the hounds, and came running down to the shore of the creek with a hatchet in his hand, and, just as the boar put foot on shore, dealt him a terrific blow on the head, and the gallant beast, without a groan or sigh, lay dead before the foe he had so long and gallantly withstood.

Sorry as we were to see him end his days in this way, it is fortunate that he did so, for no help could have been given to the hounds, and they would have been simply massacred by such a boar as this was. No one could remember having ever seen or heard of such a monster. In a few days his 'mask' will adorn my master's smoking-room. The masters of the hounds that were out have sent me a silver collar, with my performances engraved on it; and I think I may be excused if I carry my tail a little stiffer than usual, for I do not think there are many bull-terriers who can say that they have fairly 'bolted a boar.'

## A BOX-SEAT BRIDAL.

*By 'A ROADSTER.'*

**D**ON'T think she be taking kindly to him, Jack—eh? I can't make her out, nohow,' said cheery-faced Bill Axletree to his guard, Jack Ormsby, as he stood by the side of his team at a half-way house well known in the olden times.

'Maybe she might do better on the near side,' said the other quietly, as if not paying much attention.

'Maybe what, man? what are you a-talkin' of in all the world?'

'Why, the young mare, of course,' said the other, looking up startled-like. 'What are you a-talkin' of?'

'Mare be blowed, man! she'll be all right after a journey or two. I was talkin' of that nice, strapping, rosy-cheeked young lass, with the white-faced, misty-eyed fellow, as slack in the back as a whip-lash. What are they up to—eh, Jack? Gretna?'

'Gretna for certain. She looks like some good kind o' three-

parts bred lady's-maid, that's taken a fancy to the private schoolmaster, who's been putting half a score o' mail bags o' education in my Lord Duke's eldest son, and has been coaxed into a little matrimonial speculation !'

'But *she* don't seem to care for him a bit, man. That's always the way with these fly-away couples : they find coach-travelling too slow for them, or the northern climate too cold. But there's no doubt about it whatever—they do seem to get less fond of one another after being a full day out of London.'

'That don't matter to us, Bill,' said the guard. 'Folks as get married do it for better or worse, and folks as bolt to Gretna do it for both, and five pound ten a-piece, and they've paid their money. So let 'em have their spin, whether they like it or not. What's it to you or me?'

'It ain't much to *you*, Jack Ormsby, but it's something to *me*, and I won't see a woman thrown away against her will, that I'm determined on, though I should send the coach over.'

'Phew !' whistled the other to himself. 'That's how it lies ! She's been casting eyes at Bill all along the road, and now, poor soul ! he can think of nothing else. Both legs clean over the traces, the bit out of his mouth, and where will it all end ? There's about thirty-five barmaids, widows and all, between London and Carlisle, as he has promised to marry some time or other, and he ain't done yet. Well, I never did see such a cove ; but he'll get caught at last. It's dead right through the family, he says, this "love-catching," and I'm beginning to believe it. However, I can't just see how he's going to do this poor schoolmaster, who's as ignorant o' the world as a Hottentot. Howsomever, we'll see !'

Jack Ormsby stopped his soliloquy in order to give all those on the far side of a blind corner the customary warning with the straight horn, for they had been rattling on a-head for some time. Loud and clear the notes rang out over the fields and down the glens, and loud and clear the echoes came back from the hills beyond. The notes brought the gamekeeper out of the wood hurriedly with his dogs, in order to see the one daily sight of his life worth looking upon ; it brought the farmers to the barn-door, the labourers to the gateway, and the gleeful children to the wall of the playground, to give a passing cheer to His Majesty's Mail, which their dominie never failed to impress upon them was the most wonderful and grand institution in the world. Ah ! in the good old days, as its sweet notes



rang through the leafy country lanes, what joyous moments were awakened by

### THE OLD STRAIGHT HORN.

It told the bridegroom and the bride it was their wedding-day,  
When man and wife they sat beside it cheered them on their way.  
The welcome guest it heralded when snow lay thick at Yule,  
When summer's blossoms decked the hedge, the boy just home from  
school ;

The signal it to lovers gave to meet by trysting thorn—  
Oh ! ne'er so sweet shall sound again the old long-loved Straight Horn.

As full it broke upon the ear the sailor heaved a sigh,  
Its note it was the warning note to say a last good-bye ;  
It gave the soldier's bugle call to part from loving wife,  
And made the grip of friends unloose and separate for life.  
Oh, sad it must have been at times to those from lovers torn,  
But yet it warm'd full many a heart, the old long-loved straight horn.

The old straight horn, the old straight horn, oh, I will love it still,  
Through hissing steam and piercing scream of whistle sounding shrill !  
The coach the tits the brightening wits let us for ever sing,  
Ne'er be forgot the old loved trot nor thy sweet winding ring.  
It soothes me at the fall of dusk, it cheers me at the morn,  
No tabor e'er shall sound so sweet as the old long-loved straight horn.

Now a shriek and a scream, and a rushing, rattling sound of wheels, has drowned the musical sound of the horn out for ever, and the cattle in the fields scamper off when Her Majesty's Mail approaches.

Perhaps the time will come when painters will revel in tyres and air-brakes, and poets sing of throttle-valves, buffer-beams, and cow-catchers ; but we hope it will not be till the great ticket-collector, Death himself, has seen that we have duly paid our fare for the last journey.

'I really wonder what Bill means by looking after this Private Schoolmaster's girl, at all,' said Jack, relapsing into his soliloquy after he had ceased winding his horn. 'I must really see to it, or we'll get the coach a bad name, and there ain't a more respectable coach leaves the "Peacock" at Islington. I'll ax the schoolmaster chap himself, I will, whenever I gets a chance. Maybe the lass is his missus after all.'

Soon the horn was blowing again, to warn them at the next changing-house, and Bill drove his team up in front of 'The Old Oak Tree,' as the inn was named, with a style and a dash which

even astonished those who knew what a clever whip he was. The barmaid, who was, as usual, on the outlook, polishing a glass and glancing from the window, was astonished, however, to see him give her an unusual stiff recognition, whilst he became most attentive in assisting what Ormsby called the schoolmaster's girl to the ground.

'Oh, the wicked wretch!' she said; 'he cares no more for us girls than he cares for one of his hosses!'

Whilst the gay and festive coachman was doing the gallant the old guard was in a back part of the hotel, trying to discover how matters lay between the tutor (for such, indeed, he was) and the lady whose attractions had so severely smitten his friend the Jehu.

'You say you're goin' to Gretna Green! Now, you know what that means! They marries you right enough, and all that; but, mark me, all runaway mares runs away again: it's woman nature, mind you, and you should think of it in time. But maybe she's got a bit of money, and, of course, that alters matters.'

'Money, my dear fellow! She's not got a penny in the world! It's pure attachment—attachment, Sir, believe me.'

'Then, if that's it, there ain't nothing at all in it. There's no more pure attachment between any man and woman as goes to Gretna, no more than there is between the coach and me when it goes roof-over-rumble in the ditch. Besides, I can see plainly she's making up to my mate, Bill Axletree.'

'I rather think that I have seen a little of that, too,' said the poor tutor with a sigh; 'and yet only the night before last she was weeping and tearing her hair, and saying that she could never think of living in this world without me.'

'Woman, my dear Sir, woman,' said the guard, looking at him seriously. 'Trust me, I have seen more of women, more especially on such trips as you are on, than most men on the road.'

'But what's to be done? I *must* marry her.'

'Nothing of the kind. I'll just drop your portmanteau out quietly, and you can sit a little longer over your brandy-and-water when the coach is starting than the rest. I'll take care never to miss you till we are well down the road, and His Majesty's Mail, you know, will not put back for you or anybody.'

Soon all were ready, the charming-looking lady occupying a seat which had just been vacated by the side of Bill Axletree on the box. Jack Ormsby jumped up behind, and, giving the usual

starting tootle, they were soon whirling down the road. When a quarter of a mile had been covered one of the passengers began to call attention to the fact that the parson-looking gentleman had been forgotten. The louder, however, that he shouted, the louder Jack blew his horn; and it was not till they were well outside of the town that he began to show that he understood the fact.

'Oh, well,' he said, 'I'm very sorry, very sorry indeed, gentlemen; but we can't think for a moment of detaining the mail. If the lady cares we'll let her down, and she can walk back.'

The lady, however, did not show the slightest anxiety to exercise her pedestrian powers, while Bill seemed to put fresh life into his team. Few words were exchanged between himself and the guard till they halted at the next stage, when the latter said, in a serious voice,—

'Now, look here, William Axletree, this 'ere young lady is to be returned to London, mind. It's a serious business if it gets known, and you don't know what it is—abduction of an heiress, or something of that sort. It's as much as both our jobs are worth.'

'John Ormsby,' said the other, quite as seriously, 'I have ax'd that young lady to be my wedded wife, and my wedded wife she shall be.'

'When?' said the other. 'You know we *must* keep time.'

'This very day—this very afternoon. Mr. Lawnby, the curate, as you knows, will come on at Brooksby for his little bit o' driving that he's fond of, and he can do the work in a trice. There's no need for banns or anything o' that sort, they tell me, when you don't happen to belong to any particular parish, like me, that drives through a hundred o' them in a day.'

'But she ain't got a penny of money,' said Ormsby, trying to persuade him off what he called 'the most foolish step in life.'

'Money!' said the other, indignantly; 'if I had been fond o' money I'd been a guard like yourself. Money! Who said *money*?' I like the lass, John Ormsby, and she likes me; there's an end o't!

\* \* \* \* \*

Years afterwards, when Ormsby left the road, he had many a glass o' gin-and-water for relating, in something of this fashion, Bill Axletree's marriage:—

'Ye see, it was no use my preaching against him; so, when Mr. Lawnby got up and Bill gave him a Bible he got in the





Box-seat Bridal.

Hubert Bradley





"Green Swan," where he borrowed a ring from the widow, we started ceremony right off—me givin' a tune on the horn, and the hosses going over twelve miles an hour over a grand bit o' road. Parson skipped bits, I know, and got to the tying-up hitches in no time, she having 'em all off by heart. Bill required a bit of coachin', but it was very funny; and when he was asked, "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" he said, "Woa! Woa! d——n you, keep straight!" and commenced swearing awful, but it was only at the mare on the off-side. Parson Lawnby laughed like to die hisself, but he soon rushed it through, and after the ring was on he took the ribbons and drove us the whole o' the next two stages. As to schoolmaster chap, I never see'd him again; but Bill's wife turned out a clinkin' good one, bein' nearly three-parts bred, as we found out, and breedin' always tells in man, woman, or mare. It was a funny weddin', wasn't it? and Parson Lawnby (he's a Dean now) never forgets speaking about the day he married a couple going twelve miles an hour on the box-seat.'

## A REGULAR DO!

By THE RIGHT HON. THE VISCOUNT NOODLE.



DON'T care what they say! It was a disgwaceful swindle—a barefaced conspiwacy—a wegular do! Talk about scwatching Pawadox indeed! Why, it's not in it with my case, and I'll expothe it in pwint. Hang me if I don't! The question is, *what* pwint? Now it's just stwuck me, if I wite to any of the sporting papers my letter will only appear once, and it will be forgotten the next day, and that will never do. So I'll wite to a magazine instead. And now I come to wack my bwains a little, *Fores's Sporting Notes and Sketches*, which I take in and wead wegularly, comes out once ewevy thwee months. The vewy thing! I'll wire at once to the popwieter. (Hang me if it didn't take me ten minutes before I could spell popwieter, but I've got it wight at last.) Here's a copy of the telegwam I wote:—

'From LORD NOODLE,  
Numskull Park,  
Butterslideshire.

'To POPWIETER,  
"Fores's Sporting Notes and  
Sketches,"  
41 Piccadilly, London, W.

'Want to expothe a disgwaceful sporting swindle in the

*pages of your ewewy-thwee-months' Magazine. If I wite it down,  
will you pwint it? Wire weply.'*

This was the weply—

*'From POPWIETER,  
"Fores's Sporting Notes and  
Sketches,"  
41 Piccadilly.*

*'To THE VISCOUNT NOODLE,  
Numskull Park,  
Butterslideshire.*

*'Happy to insert your Lordship's paper in our next number.  
Not libellous, of course. Can't stand libel.'*

I then wote another telegwam :—

*'From THE VISCOUNT NOODLE to THE SAME.*

*'All wight ; hate libel myself. My contwibution is all twue :  
twue as Gospel !'*

Now, to wite it all down. It's all vewy well, but my hand twembles so, that I can't hold a pen. Nothing but cuwaçoa and bwandy out of a clawet glass would steady me, and the worst of cuwaçoa and bwandy dwunk to any extent is, that it wuns away with all one's ideas so. I have it ! My bwother Fwank tried to bowwow another pony fwom me only yesterday—backed Pawadox for the Cambwidgeshire, he said, and was stone bwoke. He shall earn his money for once in his life, the lazy wascal ! I'll tell him I'll *give* him a pony, on condition that he wites all this down at my dictation. No sooner said than done. Fwank jumped at the notion, of course, being anxious for his pony ; which, by the way, he twied to get incweased to fifty. But I told him, No ! I was not, I added, such a fool as I looked. 'No, by Jove ! you certainly are *not*,' he weplied ; and I fancied I heard him mutter to himself as he lit a cigar, '*I only wish you were !*' He declared he didn't, though, when I taxed him with it, and bade me 'Fire away ! for his time was pwecious.' *His* time pwecious, indeed ! I like that !

*From the HONBLE. F. LOOSEFISH to PROPRIETOR 'Fores's Sporting  
Notes and Sketches.'*

DEAR SIR,—

At my brother, Lord Noodle's request, I am about to write at his dictation a paper for your Magazine, exposing what he calls a 'plant,' practised on himself, by a great friend of mine, Jack Rapid by name. The fact is, they were both in love with the same lady, and she preferred Jack to my brother ; and quite right, too. (Between ourselves, if only you knew what an ass the latter is you wouldn't wonder !) I write exactly as Noodle dictates, copying even his pronunciation, which is precisely

similar to Lord Dundreary's, stammer and all. He probably will libel me as we go along. So much the better, as I shall in that case set my lawyer at him, and draw him freely for his cheek.

Yours impecuniously  
(or I'd see him at Jericho before I'd sit down and  
write out his nonsense),

FRANK LOOSEFISH.

P.S.—You must be awfully hard up for *copy*—eh?

Lord Noodle continues:—

When my old fwiend Jack Wapid and I both fell in love at the same time with pwitty little Miss Poppet—Chwistian name Wose—only daughter of Sir Pwimwose Poppet of 'The Gwange, I did think, notwithstanding they say that all's fair in love and war, I say I *did* think that the contest would be cawwied on between us in a spiwit of fwiendly—nay, more than that, *chivalwous* wivalwy, and that no mean twicks would be wesorted to on either side as a means of gaining supwemacy in the long wun. I wegwet to say I was mistaken in my man. I have come to the conclusion that there is about as much chivalwy in Jack Wapid's constitution as there is in a cod-fish; and that ain't much, I fancy. As for poor little Wose, I can only pity her. I am well aware that some people pwefer apples, others chalots—or is it onions?\*. Anyhow, there can be little or no poetwy in her composition, or she never would have had the bad taste to pwefer Wapid to me. Where are his whiskers? and where are his pwinciples? I pause for a reply. (My bwother, like the bwainless idiot† he is, stwikes in here with, 'If he hasn't got pwinciples he's got lots of *interwest*, anyhow; for, as you are well aware, Jack's just got a capital post under Government—twelve hundwed a-year, and nothing to do but smoke cigawettes and look at himself in the glass for an hour or so ewewy week—just the same sort of berth,' he was good enough to add, 'you ought to get for *me*, with *your* interwest.'

To return to my story. Jack and I had now been wivals for some months, and, between you and me and the post, I began to get wather sick of the whole business; so I determind to bwing my opponent to book without further delay; which there was no difficulty in doing, as he was my guest at the time at Numskull.

'Jack,' said I, that same afternoon in the billiard-woom (it

\* Note by the Honble. Loosefish: 'Onions is the usual expression, you ass!'

† Note by the Honble. Loosefish: 'Libel No. 1. Hooray!'



was a wet day and we could not go out), 'you and I are both gone on Wosey Poppet ; is it not so?'

'I know nothing about *you*, old man, but *I* am, that's vewy certain,' weplied he with a sigh, making a cannon off the wed as he spoke, and getting wed in the face at the same time.

'Well, look here, Jack,' I went on ; 'leave off, like a good fellow, knocking the balls about, and let's talk the matter over quietly.'

So he put his cue away in the wack, and we sat down to discuss the affair over a cigar.

'Now,' said I, 'to business, old fellow. I'm awfully spooney on Wosey ; will you, for fwriendship's sake, give her up? I weally believe she likes me better than you!'

'No! I'll be hanged if I do!' he wesponded, jumping up fwom his seat.

'Stop a bit!' said I, weturning to the charge. 'I know you're hard up, Jack ; will you take a blank cheque and take yourself off to foweign climes for a bit, and give me a chance that way?'

'No ; I'll be dashed if I do!' he weplied, still more emphatically. 'What do you take mefor? I'm not such a Cwcesus as you are, I'm well aware ; but I'll take my chance for all that.'

'Well, then,' said I, 'I have another plan. To-mowwow, as you know, the hounds meet at the Cwoss Woods ; it's one of their best meets, for they go stwaight to Samson's Gorse, where there are no end of foxes ; and we're sure of a wun, and a good one, too. Now, we can both of us wide above a bit. If I beat you, will you give my lady up on the condition that, if you beat me, I do the same to you?'

'That's more to the purpose! *Now* I can talk to you,' weplied my wival. 'Certainly! I agwee to that pwoposition cordially. Here's my hand on it, my old lad of wax! Only,' added he, 'as you're mounting me, you won't go and do the mean, and put me up on some old scwew that can't go along, will you? That wouldn't be fair, don't you know.'

I pwomised him, of course.

'Honour bwight!' said he.

'And shining,' I weplied.

So we parted company, each mutually pleased with the arwangement ; he evidently thinking he should beat *me*, and I myself equally certain I should beat *him*.

Now that night, as luck would have it, there was more clawet dwunk after dinner than usual, and, in consequence, we

were noisier than usual ; for not only were there a lot of young fellows staying in the house, but the stwength of the company was augmented by some of the fellows from the cavalwy bawwacks at Mudford. Well, we all went into the billiard-woom diwectly after dinner, and, having dwunk a bwandy-and-soda and smoked a cigar, I announced my intention of going to bed, in order to be fwesh the next day. My attempted departure was the signal for a pewfect shout of disappwoval.

‘Go along with you, you old muff!’ shouted one.

‘You *shan’t* go!’ yelled another, pwopping himself up against the door as he spoke.

And lastly Jack Wapid shouted out,—

‘Let him go, you fellows! Can’t you see our noble host’s dwunk—dwunk as a lord, eh? He won’t be able to wide, poor dear, if he don’t go to by-bye in good time.’

‘*Dwunk!*’ woared I, vewy angwy; ‘what do you mean, Wapid? I’ll see *you* out any night, my boy. You never *could* dwink ever since I knew you!’

‘I should think it stwange, indeed,’ wetorted Jack, ‘if I couldn’t see *you* under the table, you old muff! I’ve dwunk double as much as you alweady to-night, and, I’ll tell you what, I’ll dwink bwandy-and-soda, or, wather I should say, gin-and-soda—that’s my dwink—glass for glass, now, this vewy evening, against you for a cool hundwed. Now then!’

Jack’s pwoposal was weceived with loud applause by all the fellows, and in a weak moment I consented. My bwother went out to see about the gin as there was none in the woom, and as soon as he came back, followed by a servant with a decanter full, Jack and I set to work, and dwank glass for glass as we agweed, he with his gin, I with my bwandy.

What a dwink we had, to be sure! It makes me shudder when I think of it. But I couldn’t make it out at all; the dwunker I got the soberwer Jack appeared. The end of it was that, after, no doubt, making myself supwemely widickulous, I fell helpless under the billiawd table, and—it makes me so wild when I think of it—was cawwied to bed—actually cawwied to bed!

\* \* \* \* \*

If I was bad that night, how much worse I was in the morning may well be imagined. Bweakfast! the bare thought of it finished me nearly, and my hand twembled so that I could scarcely waise a cup of coffee to my lips. The west of the party (how I hated the sight of them all!) wode to the meet, but

I was so jumpy I was obliged to go in the bwougham, shiverwing all the way, too, notwithstanding it was a warm morning. Well, I got on my horse at the covert side (for I avoided the meet altogether), and when I had mounted, the first thing I saw, I give you my word, was a blue monkey of the most hideous descwiptiön sitting on old Peasant Boy's head, between his ears, and starewing at me with his tongue out. I twied to bwush him off, but he wouldn't go. The cuwious part of it was that Peasant Boy didn't take a bit of notice. Well, I cantered up to the covert, where ewewybody was assembled, and just as I appwoached, blue monkey and all, the fox bwoke, though the hounds had barely been in the wood five minutes.

The first fence was such a big one that only the gweat guns of the hunt jumped it, the body of the field making for the woad. I had often jumped the fence before, and thought nothing of it; but on this particular morning no power on earth would induce me to face it.

Over went the fwont wank, including Jack Wapid and little Wosey Poppet; even a schoolboy on a clever jumping-pony jumped it like a bird. Why didn't I follow them? I'll tell you. Because, sitting on the wail that topped the fence, were hundweds of monkeys and dogs, all stwiped blue and yellow, and all with their tongues out, like the blue bwute who still sat on my horse's head.

I could stand it no longer. I got off and cwied—I'm not joking—I actually cwied! Just then up came my second horseman; and I was glad to see him, I can tell you.

'Come home, my Lord,' said he, soothingly; 'you're ill, I can see.'

'What on earth's the matter with me, Tom?' said I. 'Can't you see the monkeys? Look there!—and there!—and there!—and dogs, too! Do you mean to say you don't see 'em?'

'I understand, my Lord. It's only your Lordship's fancy. You've got an attack of the twimmings. I know 'em well, my Lord. My huncle, wot kep' the "Wed Cow" at Little Swillby, 'ad 'em once, tewwible bad, so I know the symptoms.'

What a dwedful thing! Fancy being compared to my gwoom's huncle wot kep' the 'Wed Cow'—eh?

'Well, Tom got me home somehow, and I was put to bed, and a doctor sent for; and I don't feel wight even yet. The vewy sight of a bwandy-bottle gives me a headache. I found it all out afterwards. No wonder Jack Wapid kept





Frank Masson

Sept 2nd and 3rd

3/2/20





sober and I got dwunk, for he was dwinking *water-and-soda* all the time! It was a weg'lar plant—a got-up thing between him and my bwute of a bwother who is witing this for me, who no doubt went halves in the hundwed we betted.\*

The hounds had a bwilliant won that day from Samson's Gorse, Jack Wapid having the best of it thwoughout, as he undoubtedly had the best of *me*; for, losing no more time, he pwoposed to Wosey that vewy day, and was accepted by that perfidious maiden, who, as I have before wemarked, ought to have known better.

I consider his dwinking water instead of gin, and egging me on to dwink bwandy until I got an attack of D. T., the most disgwaceful swindle I ever heard of. I was determind to expose the wobberwy, and I must hereby expwess my gwatitude to Mr. Fores for enabling me to do so in the pages of his *Sporting Notes and Sketches*.

*Note by the Honble. Loosefish.*—By Jove! Noodle 'had 'em' awful bad, I can tell you. He declares now that I put Jack up to the gin dodge in order to settle him, so that I should come into the title. Really, though, he saw red bow-wows and blue and yellow monkeys to that extent that we got quite frightened—especially my mother.

The best joke of all was—I *must* tell you—'Sam' did me a bill for three hundred, on the off-chance, and is now furious because Noodle is alive and kicking; whilst I am still (and likely to remain so) plain Frank Loosefish.

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## HOW I LOST A FORTUNE AND A FOREST.

*By J. R. TENNANT.*

**I**T seems extraordinary to have lost all this at once, but I succeeded in accomplishing it. How, you will learn from the ensuing pages.

My father (a retired officer) and mother had long been dead, and I was a hard-worked clerk in a large City house. My duties were not, it is true, of a very responsible nature, and the pay was correspondingly small; but I was kept hard at work, and holidays were of rare occurrence. My salary was my only income, for my father's pension, which was all he had, had ceased with his life. I had expectations, however, from an uncle who had a fine property in Scotland; and in view, no doubt, of

\* *Note by the Honble. Loosefish.*—Hooray! Most unmistakable libel!—clear defamation of character! One or two more of the same sort and I shall be a rich man.

these, my fond and far-seeing parents had secured him for my godfather, and had called me George after him. George Farquhar was my full name; it was also my uncle's. I may say at once that hitherto my namesake had never taken the least interest in me. He had not even given the usual silver cup at my christening, and had, in fact, utterly ignored my existence. I was now about twenty-two, so that he had no excuse on the score of time; and as for opportunity, no sooner did I see his name in the *Morning Post* as having arrived in London than I rushed off and left my card. But all to no purpose. It was very annoying, as I knew the shooting and stalking at Glenbuie was excellent; but there seemed no chance of my forming one of the party, which I saw every year in the *Field*, credited with fabulous bags of grouse, and several stags with innumerable points and enormous weights.

It was about the middle of August, a blazing hot day, on which work of any kind is a positive nuisance, and the pavement gives out heat like an oven, when one of the partners informed me that they could spare my valuable services for three weeks. I was debating whether I should make my long-contemplated trip to Venice, and how I should find the ways and means—(I had a short time ago been elected a member of the 'Palladium' Club, and the entrance fee and subscription had played considerable havoc with my finances)—when in came a young friend of mine—Saunders, an embryo stockbroker—and asked me to go out with him for a short time. I got leave, and we strolled out together to one of the many places in the City where you can get a biscuit, a glass of wine, and a seat. There he unfolded his plan. He had heard, he told me, that there was going to be a big rise in North and South Hampton Stock. It was now high, but would be certain to go much higher—a 4-per cent rise in them at least.

'You should certainly buy four or five,' said he.

'Four or five doesn't seem many, but how am I to pay for them?' replied I.

'Bless your soul! I mean 4000*l.* or 5000*l.* worth! and you won't have to pay a penny-piece for them.'

And he then told me, introducing many terms which I did not understand, that I had not to 'take up' the stock, but only had to receive so much money every fortnight as it went up. I distinctly remember that he said nothing about its going down, or what happened then.

The plan seemed to my innocent mind a capital one. Let me see. A rise of 4 per cent on, say, 4000*l.*, would give me 160*l.* Why, that would enable me to pay my long-suffering tailor, would provide me with ample money for my trip to Venice, and there would be some to put by as well! In fact, I jumped at the idea. Matters were soon arranged with my speculative young friend, and that evening I received a slip of paper, informing me that Messrs. Price and Tape had bought, to my order, 4000*l.* stock in the North and South Hampton Railway at 80.

What a time of it I had for the next few days! I seized the paper each morning, tore it open, and devoured the money article. Some days my stock was lower than when I bought. I was plunged in the depths of despair. On others it rose again, filling me with renewed hopes and visions of future opulence.

One morning, when N. and S., as I had got to call them, were 'flat,' and I, in consequence, feeling the same, a letter came to me, addressed in a hand I did not know, and with a Scotch post-mark. I opened it eagerly, and found, to my great astonishment and delight, that it was an invitation from my uncle to stay at Glenbuie. It read as follows:—

'GLENBUIE, INVERNESS, N. B.

'DEAR NEPHEW,

'20 August, 18—.

'Can you come here on the 30th, and stay for a fortnight? There are plenty of birds, and the stalking should be good this year.

'Your affectionate uncle,

'GEORGE FARQUHAR.'

Could I come? Why, of course I could! Venice was discarded in a moment. I wrote back at once accepting the invitation, and for a few hours actually forgot all about N. and S. in trying to master the intricacies of Bradshaw, and in making up my mind which line to travel by. For a few hours only, however; for it was most unpleasantly brought back to my recollection by seeing a short paragraph in the *Globe* 'City Intelligence' to the following effect:—'The feature in the market is the decline in North and South Hampton Stock, which has fallen fully 2 per cent on adverse dividend rumours.' 'Good gracious!' I thought; 'why, to-morrow is settling day, and a fall of 2 per cent means that I shall have to pay 80*l.*!' I rushed off to see Saunders, whom I found just leaving for the day. He met my horrified look with the reassuring remark that 'N. and S. were better again since morning, and were now at the same price at which I bought;' adding, 'They'll soon go up.' What a



relief that was ! I felt as if I had been saved from drowning, and grasped his hand convulsively—somewhat to his surprise, I think—and inwardly vowed that if I made a profit on this venture I would never speculate again. It was wearing me to a shadow. I thought about it all day and dreamt of it all night.

Next day all went comparatively well. I received another slip of paper, informing me that the stock had been 'carried over' at the same price at which I had bought ; and also, which was not quite so pleasant, an account, showing me indebted to Messrs. Price and Tape in the sum of 5*l.* for commission and 2*l.* for 'Contango'—whatever that might mean.

I met Saunders soon after, and gave him the money and my address in Scotland, where he was to forward the profit, which he was certain was coming to me at the next 'account.'

The night of the 29th found me at King's Cross fully half an hour before I need have been there, with the usual paraphernalia of portmanteau, bag, rugs, and, last but not least, gun-case. To a moment the train started, and we were soon being whirled along at a terrific pace, past Barnet and Hatfield, on our journey to the North.

Perth, as usual, produced a crowd of people and an excellent breakfast, the only drawback to the latter being the short time allowed to eat it in, for it seemed only a minute or two when a red-haired porter thrust his head in at the door of the refreshment-room and announced 'Train for Inverness and the North !' Of course we all rushed off, leaving the remains of our breakfast, only to find, however, to our intense disgust, that there was no need for hurry. The Highland Railway is never in a hurry. The engine never goes out of a trot, except down steep hills, when it can't help itself. Its very whistle is unlike any other, and has a weird, mournful sound, which goes echoing through the woods and hills, and is suggestive of slow movement. The guard, instead of whistling when he is ready for the train to start, walks quietly up the platform to the engine, and remarks to the man in charge, 'Wullie, we'll be gangin' the noo.' All things, however, come to an end, and the Highland Railway brings you to Inverness at last.

I find a 'machine,' as they call every carriage in those parts, from a perambulator to a coach, waiting for me, and am soon on my way to Glenbuie. The driver is communicative, and tells me of the bags of grouse and other game that have been made, who was the good shot, and who was the bad ; and also

that the 'Laird is awa' at the foorest,' where I am to follow him, which will make a drive of fifteen miles.

However, with cheerful conversation, the time sped rapidly, and so did the excellent cob between the shafts. We soon left all traces of cultivation behind, and were climbing a stiffish brae, where the road led along the banks of a rocky little river, every turn of which showed some new feature of beauty, and, to the fisherman, an endless succession of glorious pools. We were now rapidly nearing our destination, for the top of the brae revealed to us a grand loch, encircled by towering hills, with the white shooting-lodge at the head of it just catching the rays of the evening sun.

As we drove up to the lodge I saw an oldish-looking gentleman coming towards us from the opposite direction. As soon as he saw us he quickened his pace, and in a moment was giving me a hearty welcome.

'Glad to see you at Glenbuie, my boy! I got a goodish beast to-day, as you'll see, yonder,' pointing to a pony just appearing with a deer on his back. 'The ground is full of deer and a good many stags clean already. But you must be tired and hungry after your long journey. Come in, and I'll show you your room.'

What a cosy place the Lodge was! The rooms were low, it is true, but they were, ceilings and all, panelled with pitch-pine, and that made it look wonderfully comfortable; and that the sport had been good was evident by the skulls and horns of deer which nearly covered the walls.

Dinner over, we soon went to bed—I, in spite of an indifferent night in the train, to dream of stags as big as bulls and with horns like Irish elks, which came and went in an unceasing procession and defied my attempts to shoot them. However, tired Nature will have her way, and at last I dropped into a quiet slumber, which was only disturbed when Dougal came in and announced, 'Eight o'clock, an' a gran' mornin'.'

We had capital sport the first week, the 'Laird' getting five good stags; while I, after three good misses, managed, to my intense delight, to secure one. We had also two capital days' grouse-shooting, at which I performed rather better than with deer.

My uncle had more than once hinted to me during this time that he was satisfied with me, and thought I should make a sportsman; and I used to fancy that the servants treated

me with greater deference every day. In fact, I should have been perfectly happy had it not been for the N. and S. The post was not regular at Glenbuie. Sometimes it came every other day; again, we were left without letters for three days. But whenever it did come I was in a fever of excitement to see the paper, which my good uncle invariably kept to himself for a considerable time, even going to sleep with it clutched tightly in his hands, while I was suffering the tortures of the condemned.

I had noticed that N. and S. had been going down the last few days; but I thought little of that, supposing that they would go up again, as they had done before. How rudely was I awakened from my dream!

One evening the letters came in, and were handed to my uncle as usual. I saw him open them one after another in his methodical way, and glance carelessly over them till he came to one which he had taken out of a blue envelope. At this he stared for a long time, the frown on his face deepening as he read. Presently he tossed it over to me without any remark, and I at once saw what had happened. His name being the same as mine, he had opened a letter from my enterprising friend, Saunders, which informed, or was meant to inform me, that 'the Bears had been at it again, that N. and S. had fallen 5, and that, worst of all, Price and Tape wanted a cheque for 200*l.*, ending up by saying that it was all right, and they were sure to go up again.'

The Laird did not say a word for some time, and I was too overwhelmed to open my lips. The former at last broke the silence by saying,—

'It is quite evident to me, George, that you have been gambling, though I confess I cannot see what Bears have to do with it. The fact, however, remains that you owe some 200*l.*; and it seems to me utterly discreditable that a young fellow like you, without a penny in his pocket, and (with emphasis) no chance of ever having one, should have entered into a speculation like this. I insist that you at once write and put an end to it. I will give you a cheque for the money.'

With that he walked out of the room and left me to my own reflections, which were none of the happiest. What a fool I had been! and what a brick the Laird was! What a mess I was in, though! for it was evident that the good impression I had made was rapidly vanishing, if it had not, indeed, already disappeared. I almost fancied that Dougal looked differently at

me as he laid the cloth for dinner. There was one comfort in all this, and that was that the 200*l.* would be forthcoming. But at what a sacrifice! There was nothing for it, however, but to do as I was told; so I wrote to Saunders, telling him to close the transaction, and enclosing him a cheque for the amount, which my uncle handed to me. Certainly it was a great weight off my mind when all this was done. I felt another being altogether, and solemnly swore never to speculate again. Things soon improved, and my uncle became his own self again, initiating me into all the mysteries of deer-stalking, and talking over estate matters with me in a way that was at once flattering and interesting, and which raised my expectations to the highest pitch.

Pride, they say, goes before a fall. I am not quite sure that I had the pride, but there was no doubt whatever about the fall. It came about in this wise. In nearly all forests there is one particular corrie, or glen, which is kept as a Sanctuary, in which, as its name implies, the deer are never disturbed, and no shot is allowed to be fired. Glenbuie was no exception to the rule in this; and the sanctuary, called Corrie Môr, was just opposite the Lodge. It was always full of good stags. I noticed that towards evening they generally came down to feed on the haughs, or meadows, on the river side; and as I had been unlucky in not getting a shot for some days, I determined to lie in wait in a hole near the bank of the river. I said nothing to any one about it; but one evening, when my uncle was away stalking on another beat and had left me behind to fish, I put my plan into execution. About six o'clock off I started, and hid myself in a peat-hag, waiting for the deer to come. It seemed hours before anything happened, and I fancy I must have dozed a little, for I was startled all at once by the sound of stones moving in the cairn above me. It was nearly dark, but I could just distinguish ghost-like forms passing along the side of the hill, about eighty yards from me. Which were stags and which were hinds I knew not; but I waited till I saw one passing which looked bigger than the rest and blazed away. A flash, a report, a terrific clatter among the stones as the herd galloped away, and in a minute or two all was still, save the barking of a collie away at the Lodge. I walked up to the place expecting to find a dead stag, but there was not a sign of anything; so, after looking about me for a few minutes, and tumbling about among the rocks and hags in the gathering darkness, I thought



I had better give it up and return to the Lodge, deferring further search till the following morning.

Little did I dream of the welcome which awaited me. The Laird was standing in the porch when I came in, and his opening words showed what a tearing rage he was in.

‘What do you mean, Sir, by firing a shot in the Sanctuary? That is a thing which I allow no man to do; and, that you may not have the chance of repeating it, I have ordered the dogcart to take you to Inverness to-morrow morning, and I never wish to see your face again!’

It was useless my telling him that I had not fired the shot in the Sanctuary, but only at the foot of it. He would listen to nothing, and packed me off next morning. And so ended my expectations. I never saw Glenbuie or its master again; but some years afterwards I saw his death in the paper, and heard that he had left the property to a distant cousin, who I suppose behaved more circumspectly than I had done. At all events he became Laird of Glenbuie, with a rent-roll of 10,000*l.* a-year, which I firmly believe would have been mine had I kept out of North and South Hampton Stock AND THE SANCTUARY.

## THE SUBALTERN OFF DUTY;

OR,

SPORT IN BRITISH BURMAH.

*By ‘CHAPEAU BLANC.’*



HERE are many varieties of the British subaltern, both on and off duty, who serve for short or long periods in ‘The Shiny;’ which term we, who have faded our red rags in the Service, may be pardoned for applying to the Dominions of our Most Gracious Majesty the Empress of India. Here men can either rapidly ‘go to the dogs,’ or lead in every way as active and happy a life as if serving in the very best of climates, and whilst attending to their duties, civil, military, or mercantile, can have better sport than in most parts of the world; but they must be prepared to rough it sometimes, fear not the sun, and forget all about the doctor not being round the corner when they imagine *coup de soleil* is imminent.

In using that frequently accepted bit of slang, 'Go to the dogs,' I wish to include in its application the young Subs who on arrival in India shun shikar, cricket, pig-sticking, and other manly exercises, on the plea that the climate is too bad, and who look upon the sun as an enemy too powerful to face, and imagine they have every malady which it is very often falsely accused of producing. Consequently they drag on a lazy, fat, unhealthy existence, consuming more B's and S's in a day than their active friends do in a week, or retire, or exchange, without having had any real knowledge of the country beyond garrison duty. These early retired drones, you will find, are those who principally abuse 'The Shiny' and everything belonging to it, after, peradventure, a total service of eighteen months, twelve of them having been spent at the *dépôt* in Homeshire!

With temperate habits, a good pith topee, and plenty of exercise, you may shoulder your rifle and wield the willow in the hottest time of the day all the year round, as I and many others have done, and be as 'fit as a fiddle.'

Now, 'gentle reader,' impetuous reader, sceptic, or whoever you may be, there is not the least occasion for you to read my accounts of sport on the *cum grano salis* principle because they happen to be told of the 'Far East;' for, as I am neither going to ask you to believe that I have waltzed with a wild hippopotamus or dived for alligators, but simply give you facts which anybody who knows the country will admit are well within the bounds of possibility, and which, after all, only frightened and did not hurt me, there is no reason why you should not have the pleasure of believing if you take the trouble to read them.

There have been, no doubt, many over-coloured shikar adventures told by old Nepaul Pepper, Chilly Chutney, Kabob Saheb, and other old Cinders, and each time told with greater solemnity, zest, or spirit, until at last (*sad* though it be) they have actually believed their own manufacture (*alias* bunnão) to be gospel.

I have often had the pleasure of a hearty laugh at many a right-royal-corker from the lips of some of India's most celebrated romancers about gun, spur and spear, and enjoyed the clever traps which a good listener, with an apparently innocent lead-on in the shape of an inquiry, could lay and successfully catch the — 'whopper.'

For instance, old Cinder, after his sixth B. and S., graphically and in measured phrases described with a considerable dash of

'I assure you, my dear boy,' 'Pon honour,' &c. &c., how one morning early, when he was going up the Wootocully Pass walking ahead of his bullock transit, he saw a magnificent tiger slowly crossing the road about ten yards from him. 'I,' he continued, 'gave him my right barrel just behind the shoulder, and most fortunately killed him stone-dead, for scarcely had the smoke cleared from between me and his dead body than a most beautiful tigress jumped right after him, halting apparently with wonder at seeing her companion lying on the road. This gave me an opportunity of letting go my *second* barrel, and thus securing a male and female right and left, which, I assure you, my dear boy, is not often done in tiger-shooting.'

'But, Sir,' quietly remarked the attentive listener, 'where did you find your double-barrel rifle, for you said this evening your servant had packed it with your heavy baggage, and that you only had your single one for use?' Old Cinder's discomfiture was great, and although he made a floundering attempt, was unsuccessful in extricating himself from the difficulty.

But to proceed with my story. Lieut. Bob Bosco, the Doctor, Captain H., and your humble scribbler, determined to have the pleasure of a shikar trip for the first time in the primeval forests of Burmah. As soon, therefore, as our 'kit' was unpacked, and our bungalows (houses) secured in that jolly little station at the end of the world called Tonghoo, we prepared for a start, having obtained a fortnight's leave.

If you look on the map don't mistake it for Toufoo, or any other Foo in China, as I did when we received the Commander-in-Chief's 'hookum' to go there instead of to Singapore—much to our disappointment.

Yes, I the Adjutant, 'the mouthpiece, too, of the C. O.—'the pattern even to a button'—mistook it, and circulated the news to the officers that we were 'going to China!' How the C. O. laughed when he came to mess that night, and was greeted with 'Well, Colonel, so we're off to the north of China!' 'Why, who, in the name of all that's wonderful, told you that?' 'The Adjutant, Sir, and we have all looked it up on the map.' I shrank into my boots and wished to disappear through the keyhole, for I was like 'little Billce,' then 'young and tender,' and had only a short time previously obtained the adjutancy. I felt all the horrid reality of the C. O. drawing his blood-drinking sword from the scabbard of revenge as he seized the map to expose my igno-

rance, but . . . he could not find Tonghoo, and had to send for another map!

I breathed again, expanded my chest once more, and shot my shirt cuffs with my usual deliberation. It was a fact that none of us that night, except the C. O., knew where Tonghoo was!

Our shooting-ground lay at a place called Meechin—vast jungles and plains in the Sittang Valley, about sixty miles south of Tonghoo—the nearest village being Banloug.

It was the height of the hot, dry season. The burning of the jungles—that is, the drier grass and undergrowth—had taken place, and we were advised to finish our trip before the monsoon came on, as fever was a pretty certain find for some time after the rains set in; also because after the burning of the dry grass the young grass sprang up with the refreshing ‘Mango showers,’ and such spots would prove the resort of many animals. This advice was no doubt sound, for although very hot, it is the healthiest time in the jungles, and the best time for sport. Unavoidably, however, we were late in starting, it being on Her Most Gracious Majesty’s birthday that Bosco and I might have been seen loading our boat at the wharf. I remember well hearing the ‘few rejoice’ (as Paddy called a *feu de joie* in the plural) being fired by the troops in garrison under the command of Sir Thomas Angler of the Light Bobs. Our boat was about three tons, with a thatched roof—just room enough under the thatch for our two mattresses side by side, and a place lower down in front for our servant to cook in—two men in the bow pulling, and one chap cocked up behind in a high, carved chair, *à la* cabby’s Hansom seat, steering. These are the ordinary boats of the rivers used for conveying rice, troops, or ngapee,\* and with a little trouble ladies even can be made comfortable enough in them. The boatmen sang cheerily, and in perfect tune and time to their stroke.

We expected to find some alligators, but we only saw one, as there were too many boats about. The only event going down stream was one the remembrance of which has many a time since, notwithstanding it being a joke against myself, made me laugh. A self-inflicted ‘sell’ often, I think, gives just as much satisfaction as a good one perpetrated on another.

We had seen a few wild peacocks steal away from the river-side on rounding the corners, and were, therefore, on the look-out

\* Preserved fish of a shockingly odoriferous character.



for the first 'likely pot' with a rifle. I always found the rifle the best weapon for peafowl, as they are so wary that it is very hard to get within range with the largest shot. A steady hand with a light rifle will find, however, that the well-conditioned body of the bird is not a very illiberal 'bull's eye' from 80 to 150 yards.

Presently, on circumnavigating yet another wind of the river, in a most uncivilised region, with nothing but forest jungle and khine grass (commonly called 'elephant grass' from its immense height) all around, we saw a fine cock about 500 yards off, sitting on the top of a high tree bared of its leaves by the recent burning of the jungle. Bosco was not ready, so I landed with my native slavey to stalk the bird.

It was really hard and very hot work, as the ground was broken and the grass so thick and tall that we had to make an opening by pushing it aside as noiselessly as possible, and thus advanced slowly and laboriously step by step, taking an occasional peep through the grass to see that he was 'all there.' Streaming with 'gems on my brow of labour,' I got to a little over 100 yards from him. Concealing myself, I took a steady 'pot' at him through the grass as he was broadside on to me, with his beautiful plumage glittering in the sun. Bang! 'Murgīā Saheb,' (Dead, Sir), exclaimed my slavey, dashing forward to pick him up and tumbling over a white ants' hill in his mad career. He was up again instanter, and charged through the grass as keenly as a St. Patrick's Day Irish rioter at a policeman. I did not know whether the bird was down or not, but the slavey shouted 'Milla' (found), and returned with him. I rejoined Bosco in triumph, and he congratulated me on my shot and the good bag for *cuisinier*.

We pushed off and the oars resumed work, there being no sign of life on shore save a monkey scout, who came to reconnoitre the enemy's position from a tree-top on hearing the crack of my rifle. But on rounding the next bend, a sharp one, at least a quarter of a mile further on, we made out with difficulty the roofs of a few cabins, and heard unmistakable feminine lamentations. I conjectured the probabilities of a ricochet of my bullet after its departure from the body of the peacock, and—O horror!—that it had peradventure penetrated the (as I feared) expiring ancient dame, who was wringing her hands and weeping and wailing.

We pulled ashore and investigated. Result: I had shot the *tame* peacock of the village! A presentation of two rupees (four

shillings) restored her equanimity and left me in possession of the bird, which proved to be gamy, tender, and delicious. How Bosco laughed, and how unconvincingly I argued that 'no tame peacock or any other cock, except an utter fool, could expect to remain alive in such a place, &c.'

Our ponies had been sent on to a small village about forty miles down stream three days before, on reaching which we rode inland to a place called Tuen. Just after mounting heavy rains came on, so we rode ahead, leaving our beds and baggage to follow on coolies' heads. We comforted ourselves with the knowledge that our beds were in waterproof cases, but two days afterwards I discovered that the coolie who carried mine had ingeniously turned the overlap of the waterproof the wrong way up, which conducted the water into my bed and saturated it. My servant, fearing to tell me this, put my grass mat and sheets over it as usual, and I did not feel the wet come through until the second night, when I awoke from a hideous dream that I was sleeping in a bed of fungi. The coolie was no doubt guilty of——well, we'll say an 'error in judgment,' but my servant deserved a licking, which he did not get as I was none the worse from the damp; in fact, we came to the conclusion that a wet bed was rather a wholesome thing than otherwise, judging by the result on this occasion. Many little playful acts of coolies and servants come to mind connected with the trip I am now writing about, but I am afraid to give the details, even of each day's shooting, for fear I should be considered long-winded and not arrive at the subject of the sketch within the limited number of pages.

We had seven elephants, one for each of our party and three to beat and carry dead game. By this you must not picture to yourself beasts slain by the hundred, as in the case of preserves at home. Not a bit of it! For even with seven elephants we had to beat for many miles, and sometimes for a whole day, without a shot. But now, while I sit in my *sanctum sanctorum* looking out on a country where I have to walk many miles for even a snipe, I sigh for the past, and declare that I would again willingly do a fortnight's tracking for the excitement of a tiger or bison!

On 'preparing to mount' the 'hathees' (elephants) the first morning the Doctor was not visible, and we conjectured he might be busy cleaning his gun. It was, however, only 5 a.m., and we were giving our final touches with oiled rags, &c. I recollected, the last thing before going to sleep (we slept on the floor, and all of

us, except the Doctor, had our mosquito curtains rigged with slings from the bamboo roofing, and well tucked in), I heard the Doctor ask me to share my curtains with him as he was in torture, but I sleepily told him to go to—Paradise, for he had always boasted that his hide could defy the longest mosquito proboscis created, and rather laughed at me for burdening my kit with curtains ! On closing my eyes I had the satisfaction of hearing him slapping at them on every part of his body, and groaning under their stings, realising for the first time the power of a Burmese mosquito while feasting on European blood. ‘Good-night, old chap,’ I chuckled, and fell into a comfortable sleep, while the buz-z-z-z went on outside my cage. While waiting for him in the morning I walked across the room where the beds were, and accidentally kicked a ‘butcher boot’ on the floor ; on looking down I saw a bare arm which the boot had just uncovered. It was one of the Doctor’s limbs, and he was still asleep ; the other arm was in the other boot, well rammed home, and his head was under the sheet. I heard him afterwards giving strict orders to his servant to borrow or steal curtains in the village for the next night.

Soon after forming line and beginning our beat, H. got a shot at a bison and wounded him. We tracked the blood for about two miles, and, heavy rain coming on, we lost it. It was then near breakfast-time, and when the rain ceased we selected a very picturesque spot near a stream under large trees, and commenced to cook our omelets, bacon, eggs, &c.

We made a point of having substantial breakfasts, as we worked steadily till 6 or 7 in the evening. While enjoying this meal we observed the mahouts very busy in helping one of their number to climb a tree, the elephants being left alone to browse close by. It was a hive of honey they were climbing for, which they succeeded in securing, and brought to us. We had just pronounced it excellent, when we heard a trumpeting, and saw all the elephants going off with tails and trunks erect, full-swing through the forest, smashing and crashing all before them. Away went the mahouts in pursuit, and we wondered whether we should see them again that day. In an hour and a half, however, they were brought back captives. My elephant, named ‘Goolab Khan,’ was the unkindest, for he had smashed my howdah to pieces ; but the Burmese shikarees managed to repair it with bamboo bark and splices, and it appeared quite strong on testing it.

We resumed our beat but saw no sign of bison or other game for about four hours, when we suddenly came on a spot in forest jungle where they had evidently been recently lying down. Whilst looking for their track up jumped a young bull-calf of about four months old, stretching himself, and mistaking at first my elephant for his father or mother! We were bent on his capture, and for this purpose endeavoured to surround and cut him off from the long grass close by. Great was that chase, for, the moment he discovered his mistake, he 'legged it' hard within our circle. Eight of us on foot, and seven elephants, steered by their mahouts, were, however, ignominiously beaten by this young beast; but the hardest cut of all was when our Bos, the Captain, made a violent effort and caught him by the hind leg. The calf dragged him to the ground and kicked him off as if he were a fly, and then escaped into the long grass, much to our disappointment, for we had really hoped to send him as a specimen to the 'Zoo,' and regretted having spent an hour over him instead of following the herd, the tracks of which we soon found, and beat on for a couple of hours (not firing at any other game for fear of disturbing the bison), when we suddenly lost them on coming to what I must call a patch of prairie in forest-jungle. Here we advanced our elephants in skirmishing order at from sixty to eighty yards apart, and after proceeding a thousand yards or so we saw horns appearing above the lower grass, which denoted the presence of a magnificent herd. They were knocking the flies off, and appeared quite ignorant of our approach. Our object was to get close up and into the middle of them and then select the largest bulls, but H——'s rifle having been unfortunately 'messed' by his shikaree, went off, which sent the whole herd at full gallop before we were half near enough. One of them galloped across me at about eighty yards, and on seeing his horns I let fly. His horns went higher still in his next stride, and I felt sure I had missed him. My mahout, however, thought differently, and probed 'Goolab Khan's' poll with the 'ankus' (iron hook and spike), urging him on at full speed to give me a chance of my second barrel if the bull was wounded. I was standing up in my howdah, with my legs apart and fixed against the rails of the howdah to steady myself against the violent oscillation of the elephant, when up went his trunk with fright on coming on the body of the bison, and he stopped dead with a jerk which forced me against the front of the howdah. Crash went the rails, splices, and bamboo bark, and down I



went, head foremost, heels in the air, over the elephant's left ear. In imagination, I felt the horns of the wounded bison going through me, as I saw no chance of doing anything when actually on his body, but the mahout seized me by the coat tail, and while still holding my full-cocked rifle in my right hand as far away from myself as possible, I seized the elephant's left ear with my left hand, and, like the Frenchman, 'did remain.' The bison was stone dead, shot through the spine—a very lucky shot. 'Goolab Khan,' though a most perfectly trained elephant even at tiger, was on this occasion almost mad with fright. He came so suddenly on the fallen bison when being goaded forward at full speed, and then my fall on his head must have so added to his confusion, that I think he must have fancied that the bison was on the top of him. At any rate, he could not be pacified for hours afterwards. He was not only a well-trained elephant for shikar, but was also perfect in many tricks, which his mahout took great pleasure in showing off. Many a time he has tested a rickety bridge for us, and while I sat in my howdah he has taken my hat off the ground and placed it gently on my head with his trunk, &c. &c.

We had another most exciting kill of an old bull bison next day, but I must, in Etonian language, 'shut up' without giving you any incidents of our terrible cross-country ride home over sixty miles.

Our bag during the trip was 3 bison, 4 pigs, 2 themin (large red deer), 2 deray (small deer), 24 sambah—total, 35, not counting the tame peacock, wild ones, or snakes.

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## THE BRIGHT BELVOIR TAN.

By 'TOM MARKLAND.'



WHEN the glades that the groves of Old Croxton enfold  
Are bedecked in sere autumn with amber and gold,  
See the bevy of beauty, of scarlet, of blood,  
Filing past the huge oaks that for ages have stood.

For the bright Belvoir hounds  
Are breaking their bounds;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho! Tally-ho! for the bright Belvoir Tan.



I seized the  
elephant's left ear with  
my left hand and, like the  
Frenchman, did remain.

R. H. Standish  
3



The scenes are entrancing, the huntsman is bold,  
Full oft hath the tale of his prowess been told ;  
Apollo beams brightly, and 'neath the proud trees,  
That were there when the Norman came over the seas,

The bright Belvoir hounds  
Are breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

Since that heritage fair the grim Conqueror gave  
To his tall standard-bearer, Sir Robert the Brave,  
With the shields of famed warriors its walls have been hung,  
And with Dian's bright train the wide champaign has rung,

While the bright Belvoir hounds  
Are breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

Right stanch are the oaks round its ramparts, I trow,  
And the scythe of old Time, though he ceaselessly mow,  
Finds as stout 'hearts of oak' to hold rule in its halls,  
To awaken the echoes when Autumn-tide falls,

And the bright Belvoir hounds  
Are breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

As we ride, how old memories stream down the wind !  
Sweet musings of present and past times entwined :  
Comes to mind the brave Marquis who crimsoned the plain  
With the blood of the Frenchmen at Dettingen slain,

While the bright Belvoir hounds  
Are breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

At the thought of the time of Lord Forester's power,  
In the wake of our beauties in fancy we scour ;  
From Bescaby Oaks to the time-honoured fane,  
That appealed to grim Oliver's mercy in vain,

While the bright Belvoir hounds  
Are breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.



To Burbidge's grey hearty tribute we pay—  
 How he led the fleet-goers ! what powers to 'stay !'  
 Though no more to the meet his game master may ride,  
 Full oft he's on wheels at the New Covert side,

When the bright Belvoir hounds  
 Are breaking their bounds ;  
 Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
 Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

And while squadrons of scarlet stream into the Vale,  
 The oldsters at Hose shall the tyros regale  
 With the heart-stirring theme of the red-letter day,  
 When they ran the great gallop from Croxton to Kay,

While the bright Belvoir hounds  
 Are breaking their bounds ;  
 Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
 Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan,

While we sing of the deeds of the riders so keen,  
 That in spite of the 'croppers' were oft to be seen  
 In the last, or the last field but one, at the rush  
 To the spot where poor Charley surrendered his brush,

When the bright Belvoir hounds  
 Were breaking their bounds ;  
 Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
 Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

Shall we fail to record how, one fortunate morn,  
 Stout Goodall got grip of the famed Belvoir horn ?  
 How we raced o'er the plain, or breasted the hill,  
 And, no fox to the fore, still hunted poor Will ?

While the bright Belvoir hounds  
 Are breaking their bounds ;  
 Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
 Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

Then was ignorance bliss ; and when steeds were in stable,  
 Their riders' feet tucked 'neath the well-garnished table,  
 'Twas pity, I ween, that we boys should be told  
 How to Goodall's 'Yoi-oicks !' we had charged the steep wold,

When the bright Belvoir hounds  
 Were breaking their bounds ;  
 Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
 Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

For old Will was the boy to keep rolling the ball,  
With a field and a pack to respond to his call ;  
His steed had bestridden full many an acre  
The night that he ran down the poor Grantham baker,

When the bright Belvoir hounds  
Had been breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

There's a gorse that sweet Chaucer some merry May morn  
Must have scanned ere he sang how 'milk-white' was the thorn ;  
But we fondly recall how the rasper was run  
To ground at Oldhills though at Newman's begun,

When the bright Belvoir hounds  
Had been breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

Now a cheer for *Sir* Francis—a cheer for the day  
When the beauties from huntsman and field ran away,  
And, the twilight fast waning, his favourite mare  
Kilgraston's lone scion to victory bare,

When the bright Belvoir hounds  
Had broken their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

While the minstrel the praises of Belvoir shall sing,  
With the sportsman's tantivy Lawn Hollow shall ring ;  
The reed may be cracked, and unstrung be the lyre,  
'Tis the theme, not the metre, that never can tire!

While the bright Belvoir hounds  
Are breaking their bounds ;  
Their form is so bonny, no fleeter e'er ran—  
Tally-ho ! Tally-ho ! for the bright Belvoir Tan.

## CURLING AGAINST THE KILTIES.

*By* 'ROCKWOOD.'*Air:* 'Come under my plaidie.'

'Ae nicht it was freezin', ae nicht it was sneezin' ;  
 Tak' care, quo' the guid wife, says she, of your cough.  
 A fig for the sneezin', hurrah for the freezin',  
 For the day we've to play the Bonspeil on the loch.  
 Then get up, my braw leddy, the breakfast mak' ready,  
 For the sun on the snawdrift's beginnin' to blink ;  
 Gie me bannocks or brochan, I'm aff to the lochan,  
 To mak' the stones flee to the "T" o' the rink.

Then hurrah for the curling frae Girvan to Stirling ;  
 Hurrah for the lads o' the besom and stane.

Ready noo ! Soop it up ! Clap a gaird ! Steady noo !

Oh, curling abune a' the games stands alane.'

*Late Dr. Norman Macleod, of 'Good Words,' in 'Blackwood's.'*



YES ! Curling undoubtedly stands alone. Every Scotchman will agree to that ; for, no matter how fond he may be of angling or shooting, golfing or bowling, he will be ready to maintain that curling is 'the game of games.' In the Land o' Cakes every man who is able, plays it when King John Frost is kind enough to give him a strong and slippery icy board over the numerous lochs of that picturesque country. The Duke, the Marquis, and the Earl, the Laird and the Laird's man, the Minister, the Beadle, and the Precentor, play it ; and the tenant, the mason, the tailor, and the weaver, are all to be found joining with enthusiasm in this most cheering and invigorating of pastimes. Games have been played between the lairds and the tenants, the ministers and the members of the congregation, the knights of the needle and the knights of the barn ; struggles which have been commemorated in undying verse by the local poets of the time, as well as recorded in the parochial history of the country.

It was reserved, however, for the little garrison town of Ram's Horn, on the Highland Border, to supply a contest quite out of the common. The gallant Twa-and-Forties had just marched into barracks in the little place when frost set in, and a good many of its older members having been curlers in their youth lost no time in getting out upon the ice. Like

most well-travelled men, they had some little swagger left in them as to their experiences, and, having been stationed in Canada, were rather loud in the rehearsal of their curling exploits in that far-away country.

'Ice!' said the Colonel to the Laird of Lamondby, the chief curler of the parish; 'man, ye ken nothing about it. We have square acres—I might say cubic acres—man, in Canada, for six months in the year, and can curl all night, let alone all day.'

'And do ye mean to say, Cornel, ye can curl, you and your men, better than the best rink in Ram's Horn parish?—the rink that has won more medals of the Royal Caledonian than any one in Scotland? Come now, be careful!'

'I mean to say, Laird, as sure as we were auld school-fellows and played football together, that Sergeant-Major Murdoch, Corporal McDougall, and a big fellow they call Tamson, and mysel', will play the best rink ye have for anything ye like. Come, say the word! What's the price of oatmeal just now?'

'Twenty-six shillings a boll.'

'Well then, ten bolls of first-class oatmeal, suitable for parritch, to be given to the poor if we lose, and two new sets of bagpipes to be given to the regiment if we win. Are you off or on?'

The reply to this was a warm squeeze of the hand.

'Then we play the Lennox town men the morn. But we'll meet you next day, and if we don't beat you, by my faith I'll stand you pipes, bags, drones and chanter, enough to blaw a hurricane of Hieland music through Glentilt! There, now, good-night: and meet me with your best men on the Birkenloch at ten o'clock on Thursday.'

The Birkenloch (so named from its being sheltered from the sun's rays by a clump of birch-trees) was on the Thursday morning a scene of more than usual curlers' excitement, which, to those who have seen the roaring game played on the Royal Caledonian Pond at Carsebreck, or that at Lochwinnoch in the south, means a great deal.

The soldiers had got to know of the match, and so also had the inhabitants; so there was quite a gathering when, preceded by the regimental pipers, who blew seemingly harder than usual, knowing their interest in the stake, the Colonel and his men marched on to the ice, which was as keen and as slippery as ever.



Not long had they to wait till, amidst cheers, the Laird of Lamondby and his lads—tall John Morriston, the town-clerk ; wee, bandy-legged Jamie Sneddon, the tailor, with a besom two inches taller than himself ; and *douce* Davie Derrocks, the weaver—came with a slinging trot out from the Black Bull Hotel, the windows of which overlooked the loch. The rink on which they were to play had been carefully swept, and the broughs, tees, and *hog* and *sweeping* scores drawn for them by Donald, the old village character, who took charge of the Club curling-stones ; so little was left for them to do but to take up their stations and begin.

To those who have never seen or enjoyed a game at curling it may be explained that diagrams are drawn on the ice very much resembling Wimbledon targets, the tee being in the actual centre, and that the winners are the shots which are nearest the tee when the last stone has been played.

A stone to count must be within the outer circle, and to be allowed to remain on the ice at all must clear the 'hog' score, which is situated about a sixth part of the length of the rink, forty-two yards from the tee. Now, when it is known that the stones, with beautifully polished bottoms, are not less than fifty pounds in weight, that the ice is slippery as glass, that the circles cannot be seen like the target, being simply drawn on the ice, some little idea of the skill required in the game will be understood. To play a stone too strong is literally to throw it away, as it crosses the tee and is lost ; to play too weak and not to cross the hog score is to see your stone kicked aside, amidst the laughs of your opponents and the complaints of your leader or skip. Yet the latter is the safest in most cases, as the other members of your rink or side will so polish the ice with their brooms that it will go on for yards after it has all but stopped dead, and not infrequently, amidst roars of laughter from the onlookers, a stone has, when it reached the tee, been tempted by the brooms of the opposite side, who are entitled to sweep behind this mark, to go out of the circle altogether. In the warmth of sweeping lies one of the charms of the game, for no man is ever standing still, but has to work away with a will in the clear frosty air.

The scientific points of the game consist in the drawing of shots by the 'leads,' the 'guarding' of such by the next players, the 'removing of the guards,' the 'wicking,' or 'cannoning' as a billiard-player would have it, on to the tee, and the 'curling,'



'Don't touch him, me-  
' 'not a broom!'

AMAL/EXD/13



or putting on of 'twist' in the delivery of the stone, which makes it screw round intervening stones to the centre when cannoning off the face of others, or when stopping from a careful, steady draw.

But the Pipers of the Twa-and-Forties are playing a stirring pibroch, and the Laird of Lamondby and the Colonel are stationed at the tee, each with his sweeping-broom in hand. The Corporal is his 'lead,' and has taken his place on the crampit or foot-board at the far end of the rink, with his curling-stones, a pair of 'Ailsa Craigs' cut from the well-known rock of that name, by his side. His opponent is Jamie Sneddon the tailor, and the military man has to play first.

'There is the tee at my broom, Corporal,' says the Colonel. 'The ice is keen, so be careful, and we'll sweep you up a nice-drawn shot.'

The Corporal looks at the broom-head with a steady eye, then delivers his stone evenly on the ice, and what is called 'well soled.'

'Well laid down, Sir! He's a good one if he's here; but I think you want pith! Bring him on, boys! Sweep him up! Fetch him on! That's right, now! Well done! You're barely up; but you'll do!'

'Now, Weaver,' says the Laird of Lamondby, standing forward, 'here's the tee at my feet.' 'Keep clear o' that;' and I want you to give me a nice-drawn shot, about a couple of feet short. I know you can do it.'

'You've nobly played, Sir! You're all here when you stop!' (*Remonstratingly*).—'Don't touch him, men—not a broom! I tell you he's strong enough! He's here every inch! I told you so! Bravely played, Weaver!' is his remark, as the stone halts almost at the very spot he pointed out.

But the Corporal lifts the shot next time and leaves his own stone lying in its place, and the Weaver failing to draw a winner on the opposite side, the military are left in possession. It is only for a brief duration, however, for Sneddon, the bandy-legged tailor, is too much for the brawny private, Tamson, and, after chipping out the military stone, leaves the civilian beautifully guarded, amidst remarks from the Laird of Lamondby, and of Jamie, that 'it would take a lot of setting-up drill to mak' ye a sojer, but ye'll set the best sojer down as a curler.'

The Sergeant-Major, however, with a terrible rattle, sends a stone of fully 50lbs. weight dead on the guards like a cannon



ball, and, amidst roars which might be heard afar off, sends stones, including the winner, flying in all directions. The result of an inspection shows the soldiers to have the shot; but as it is wide, and not very well guarded, the Town Clerk, cautious, as all lawyers are, being used to treading on slippery ground, slips in a nice, gently-played stone, which his opponent, failing to draw to the face of, as requested, the former beautifully guards with his second. The Colonel and the Laird of Lamondby having to play the final stones, the former shows undoubted skill by entering a narrow part, steering through it like a ship through a rock-bound channel, and secures the shot. It is in vain that the Laird tries to follow him; and the result of the first head is, that 'the Sojers,' as the natives, who have gathered in large numbers, call them, have gained a single shot.

With the sun shining out strongly, and gilding the snow-clad hills and the snow-laden trees; with skaters flitting to and fro in all directions; with the pipers marching up and down as they played stirring pibrochs; with the red uniforms of the private soldiers as they vied in sliding; the scene was a very picturesque and animated one—one, indeed, which could only be seen on a Scotch curling-pond in a garrison town like that of Ram's Horn.

Head after head was played; the members of the competing rinks lurching on Irish stew boiled in a pot close at hand, and not forgetting to wash it down with a wee drop of the mountain dew. Neither side managed to steal away with a strong lead; indeed, success at one end was balanced by defeat at the other. Of course there were the usual roars to players, to 'Soop him up,' and 'Bring him on,' varied by the shouts to 'Leave him alane!' 'Not a broom!' 'He's roarin'!' 'He's raging!' 'He's clean through everything!' 'He's off the ice!' With such-like congratulations as, 'Well played, Sergeant!' 'You for a curler, Weaver!' or the expostulations, 'Oh, man, what's wrong wi' ye? ye're no over the hog score!'

At last both sides started at par for the last, or twenty-first head. 'Was it to be pipes or parritch?' was the question. 'Music for the military or meal for the poor?' The crowd gathered round, a good few excited soldiers amongst them; amongst them also a great number of the poor folks of the town, anxious, of course, to see Laird Lamondby win the ten bolls of oatmeal. The Weaver and the Corporal both delivered their stones in a faultless manner, the former having the luck and the *shot*. Private

Tamson was, however, too much for the bandy-legged tailor, who was told to go and 'list if he could not play better by the Laird, with the rather personal remark that the cannon balls might go through his legs but would never take them off. For the honour of the town the Town Clerk played in a most surprising manner, and the Colonel had but three fourths of a winner visible to chip out when he stood on the 'crampit' stane in hand. This he did in matchless style, and a cheer went up from the onlooking soldiers, such as might have been heard away up on the tops of the snow-clad Grampians. But they cheered too soon. The Laird drew a shot for the same point, and with a slight inward curl on, had the satisfaction of seeing it, after a sweep of his own broom—for he followed it as a mother would a child, and would let none of the other sweepers touch the ice—twist on to the actual tee. There were but three inches of it visible, and the Colonel missing it, the ten bolls of meal were won for the poor of the parish of Ram's Horn.

Yet the military men were generous, though defeated, and with the pipers at their head marched to the 'Black Bull,' where, at the expense of the Colonel and the Laird of Lamondby, not only the curlers were entertained, but almost every one of the crowd of onlookers present. This, possibly, is the reason the old residents still speak with warmth of 'Curling against the Kilties.'

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## THE CORSICAN BROTHERS.

*By* FINCH MASON.



IN two separate farms—each farm being situated on the top of a hill, and each hill staring one another hard in the face—dwelt two old bachelor farmers, rejoicing in the name of Smith—Christian names John and James respectively. They being twin-brothers, as a natural consequence they were both of the same age, some seventy odd years. In appearance they (I say 'they' advisedly, for they were so much alike it was almost an impossibility to tell them apart) were tall, angular, wiry old fellows, with hard, sharply-defined features. In habits they were equally alike with one exception. James was a total abstainer. John, on the contrary, boasted that he had not gone to bed sober, to use his own expression, for 'five-and-forty year or more.' They

were both sportsmen to the backbone, each brother riding, if possible, harder than the other; the only advantage one could score against the other as regards horsemanship being that old John (the drunkard) was able to mount his horse of a hunting morning without assistance of any sort or kind, whilst the total abstainer was forced to avail himself of a horseblock previous to getting up. Lastly, they both hated each other like poison.

Many a time and oft did the good clergyman of the parish try and reconcile these two perverse old files, but it was not a bit of use. He even, occasionally, went the length of preaching dead *at* them. But it was pure waste of breath on his part, for old James invariably slept the sleep of the just all through the sermon; and John, who kept awake out of pure opposition to his brother, as he listened to the parson's well-meant and earnest exhortations with regard to forgiveness generally, would shake his head, purse his lip, and, with a frown at the sleeping sinner in the opposite pew, mutter audibly, 'No, no, I'm not a-goin' to do that. *No! no!*'

Some wag years ago had christened the pair the Corsican Brothers, partly in consequence of their being so much alike, and partly in playful allusion to the strong language each was accustomed to use on all possible occasions. The hardest swearer in that celebrated army of ours in Flanders would have had his work cut out for him with a vengeance had he entered the list in a cussing match against either of the twins. They were aware of the *sobriquet* that they went by, and on one occasion old John, riding home from hunting with that lively Oxonian, young Charles Lightfoot, accosted that gentleman point-blank with,—

'Ar say, Muster Charles; tell us now, what do they mean when they calls me and the silly old fule that disgraces mar name, the Carsican Brothers?'

'Why do they call you the Corsican Brothers? What! don't you know?' replied, in apparent astonishment, the volatile Charles, with a grin. 'Why, because you're both so deed ugly to be sure. Ha! ha! ha!'

And, as 'Muster Charles,' as he called him, was always full of his chaff, the old farmer, who rather fancied his own personal appearance than otherwise, took Lightfoot's explanation in an opposite sense, and was henceforth rather pleased than not at the nickname.

In spite then of all persuasions and remonstrances on the part of the Rector and other well-meaning friends, the two old boys still went on hating each other, if possible, harder than ever. They rode against each other out hunting, they bid against each other at cattle sales,—nothing pleased Silkey, the local Tattersall, better than to see the Corsican Brothers scowling at each other from opposite sides of the ring at one of his monthly auctions in Slopperton Market Place, for, as he very well knew, if he could only persuade the ancient Jimmy to make a bid for a heifer or a pig or a sheep, as the case might be, old Jackey, as they called John Smith, who on these occasions was generally pretty full of brandy-and-water, would never rest until he outbid his more temperate brother—until at last the would-be peacemakers gave it up as a bad job, and, to use a slang expression, determined to allow the old reprobates to run loose for the future.

At length, when everybody had long since made up their minds that the Corsican Brothers would make their inevitable descent into what Mrs. Gamp would call the ‘Walley of the Shadder’ without making up their differences, chance brought about the very end that they had for so long been endeavouring to bring about, viz., a reconciliation. It came about in this wise.

The shining light of that particular part of the country in which dwelt the renowned Corsican Brothers was young Lord Hopscotch. Hoppy, as his intimate friends called him, was a great card amongst the sporting fraternity of those parts. All sorts of sports and pastimes he had patronised in his time—hunting, racing, yachting, pigeon-shooting, coaching, cricket, the ring—he had had ‘a go at ’em all,’ he pleasantly would say; and now, having arrived at years of discretion, and being besides rather a flighty-dispositioned young nobleman—one of the

‘All things by turn, and nothing long,’

sort—he had sickened of them all with the exception of the legitimate field-sports of a country gentleman, and had now, to the great delight of his family, taken unto himself a wife, established himself as M. F. H., and, in fact, settled down to his duties as a county magnate in a becoming manner.

Amongst other amusements that my lord had gone in for was one that we have not mentioned in our list, as it could hardly be classed with sport, and that was, breeding fancy stock. Disgusted at the death, a week after he had bought him at



Lord Fallowfield's great sale of shorthorns, of a promising young bull with a pedigree as long as his arm—a mint of money he cost him too, almost as much as would buy a Derby winner—he determined to clear off the whole of his fancy stock—bulls, cows, calves, heifers,—the whole lot, in fact. If the truth must be told too, he was rather glad of the excuse than not, for, never having taken very kindly to farming operations, he began to find the hunting up of pedigrees, the perusal of his stock-book, and the long interviews with his snuff-taking, long-winded Scotch bailiff, Donald McPherson—or, McPhairson, as he himself pronounced it—rather wearisome work, and the death of the young bull having thoroughly disgusted him with the whole business, he forthwith wrote off to Mr. Silkey, the auctioneer, instructing him to arrange for a clearance sale at an early date. And Silkey, having driven over instantanè and made a list in the great red-backed, brass-clasped volume he dignified by the name of note-book, of all the valuable cattle—Tenth Duke of Draggletail, Lady Louisa the Second, and so on—there shortly appeared in the county paper, and all the sporting journals, the announcement, headed, '*Important Sale of Shorthorns*,' of the fact that on such and such a date Mr. Silkey had been honoured by the Right Honourable the Earl of Hopscotch with instructions to sell, without reserve, his lordship's entire stock of valuable shorthorns. 'Breeder and connoisseurs,' wound up the veracious Silkey, 'will recognise in this list of shorthorns some of the very finest blood in the kingdom; most of them having been selected at different times by his lordship with very great discrimination, and purchased by him quite regardless of expense.'

The day arrived on which the great sale of Lord Hopscotch's shorthorns was to take place, and half the county were apparently assembled in his lordship's park, as, with wine-flushed face, the great Mr. Silkey, swelling with importance, pushed his way with difficulty through the crowd and mounted his rostrum. Lord Hopscotch, well alive to the undeniable fact that the true way to a man's heart, and consequently his purse, is by way of his stomach, had taken good care to provide a sumptuous luncheon, with oceans of champagne, for all comers, in a huge marquee hard by the ring; consequently, when Mr. Silkey, having set the ball a rolling with a few of the pleasantries for which he was so famous, ordered that fine young bull, Tenth Duke of Draggletail, to be led up to the rostrum, 'the bidding, thanks to the pop,' as Lord Hoppy, who sat by the auctioneer's side

smoking a huge cigar, facetiously remarked, 'quickly became fast and furious.'

\* \* \* \* \*

'Now then! wot's all that noise about? Can't you keep quiet there? 'Ow is it possible to sell his lordship's beasts with sich a row as you're making, going on, I should like to know? What's that you say, Mr. Smith? I knocked that last cow down to your brother instead of to you? Well, wot of it? with the pair on you as like as two peas, how the deuce am I to tell which of you it is? Which of you am I to put it down to? for, dash me, if I know which is which.' Thus delivered himself, the eloquent Mr. Silkey, red in the face with indignation and talking, addressing himself more particularly to our friends the old Corsican Brothers, the cause of all the hubbub and confusion in the ring just beneath the rostrum.

The two brothers, standing in close proximity to one another, had both bid for a cow. As usual, old Jackey, well primed with champagne, had outstayed his brother and secured the cow, as he thought. Unfortunately, the auctioneer, not knowing t'other from which, had booked the animal to old Jimmy—a very pardonable error on his part—and a pretty kettle of fish was the result. Old Jimmy, delighted at the mistake, and for once not minding the extra fiver, insisted on sticking to his bargain. Old Jackey, needless to say, was furious; swearing, gesticulating, and going on, until, as the auctioneer told him, he ought to be ashamed of himself at his time of life.

At last, the long-suffering Mr. Silkey could stand it no longer, and, descending from the rostrum, pushed his way through the noisy crowd to where the two disputants were engaged in wordy war.

'Look here, you two,' said the indignant auctioneer; 'I can't and won't stand this noise no longer. I shan't get through my work all day at this rate. If you can't agree, why don't you go and fight it out like men? not stand squabbling here like a couple of old washer-women interrupting his Lordship's sale.'

'Yes, fight it out! Fight it out!' yelled the laughing crowd, delighted at the idea.

No sooner said than done. The auctioneer little knew his men when he proposed in a moment of thoughtlessness an ordeal by battle.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when old Jackey

tearing off his coat, and dashing his hat on the ground with such force as to knock the crown clean out, put himself in fighting attitude, and with many oaths called on Jimmy to 'Come on!'

Nothing loth, brother James divested himself in like manner of *his* hat and coat, and put himself in position likewise.

The gratified crowd formed a ring in less time than it takes to write this, and in another minute there would indeed have been a set-to between the renowned Corsican Brothers. But it was not to be. Lord Hopscotch, from his seat on the rostrum, who had up to now been an amused spectator, at this juncture thought it high time to interfere, like the good-hearted fellow he was. Accordingly, jumping down from his seat, he was quickly in the ring, and got between the two old pugilists just as they were putting up their hands to fight.

'Come! Come! This won't do, you know!' said the good-natured nobleman, addressing his two turbulent tenants. 'John and James, I'm ashamed of you! Old gentlemen at your time of life ought to know better. Why, you're no better than a couple of school-boys. Now, look here,' said Lord Hoppy, 'we'll settle this business about the cow in a brace of shakes. We'll toss. That's fair for both of you. I'll chuck up the coin, and our worthy friend Silkey here shall cry. You agree? Good! Now, Mr. Silkey, heads for Jacky, tails for Jemmy. Sudden death! Up she goes!' And suiting the action to the word his Lordship spun half-a-crown in the air, and dexterously caught it as it fell.

'Heads!' shouted the auctioneer.

'Heads it is!' replied my Lord, opening his hand. 'Your cow, Jacky, and I wish you luck with her. And, now, I tell you what it is. You wanted just now to see which was the best man. Now, I'll tell you a better plan than settling the question with your fists. You shall ride a match across country, this day fortnight. Three miles, say, over a fair hunting country, thirteen stone each, the stakes a hundred a-side, and I'll give a silver cup to the winner. How will that suit you? Don't both speak at once.'

'I'll hev it for one, my Lordship; and I'll name mar old brown hoss, Ploughboy. He'll beat any rubbish he's got in *his* stable, I reckon!' replied old Jacky, with a scornful look at his brother.

'And I'll hev it likewise. I'll name mar grey mare, Starlight Bess. And 'arl bet un a twenty-pun note besides—and put it

down *now*—ar licks him; and holler tew!’ said old Jimmy, producing, as he spoke, a dirty old bag, full of notes and gold, from his breeches-pocket, and picking out a twenty-pound note.

‘Then that’s settled!’ said cheery Lord Hopscotch. ‘This day fortnight, you recollect. Two o’clock. Start and finish to be on my home-farm. You must all come, do you hear, and see which is the best man,’ said he to the farmers standing round. ‘And we’ll have a regular day of it; and I tell you what,’ he added, ‘I’ll bet any of you six to four no one names the winner!’

And, amidst a hearty round of cheers from the assembled company, his popular Lordship skipped gaily once more up into his place on the rostrum next the auctioneer, and, having lit a fresh cigar, bade that worthy once more, ‘Fire away!’

\* \* \* \* \*

Drags, carriages, dog-carts, gigs, pony-traps, sportsmen on horseback, sportsmen on foot, neatly-habited ladies cantering gaily about, farm-labourers and their wives; such a gathering of country folk are gathered together in the twenty-acre grass-field adjoining Lord Hopscotch’s home-farm as surely never was seen on that spot before. The pigs and the cows, and the cocks and the hens, driven from their favourite lounge by the sudden influx of visitors, to take refuge in the big straw-yard, might well stare with astonishment.

And with what object are all these people here for this bleak, wintry-looking day? Why, to see the old Corsican Brothers ride their great match for a hundred pounds and my Lord’s cup, to be sure!

Old Harry Oldaker, the octogenarian, declares, as he looks round on the assembled multitude, that never in his remembrance has any event caused such excitement in the county as the present match, since the eventful day, more than half a century ago, when Tom the Tinker fought Black Sambo for two hundred a-side on a stage erected for the occasion on Ledbury racecourse. The old man’s heart warms at the sight.

The arrangements are, of course, primitive. The barn belonging to the farm being turned into a weighing-room, whilst the judge’s chair is not discernible to the naked eye, though a long pole with a blue flag attached does duty for the winning-post.

Lord Hopscotch’s huntsman and whips, though, keep the course, and give a business-like air to the surroundings; whilst



a huge marquee in the rear points to the fact that 'Hoppy' is doing things in his usual freehanded fashion for the benefit of 'the gentlemen in the top-boots,' as Thackeray calls the farmers in one of his books—*Pendennis*, if we recollect rightly. Well may these worthies, as they and their missuses drink my Lord's health in all manner of liquors, from champagne to hot punch, that cold day, avow that he's a jolly good fellow, and no mistake at all about it!

Lord Hopscotch, assisted by his huntsman, had himself marked out the course; and, being used to this sort of thing, had done his work admirably. About three and a half miles of fair hunting country (the fences, including some double posts and rails, and a natural brook) had been flagged out. They were to start at a corner of the big grass meadow within sight of everybody, and, running a sort of circle, were eventually to come round to the same field, where they were to finish.

And now let us follow Lord Hopscotch, who is getting on his pony to lead the two old boys to the starting-post. A crowd approaching from the far-end of the field, with two mounted men in the midst, denotes that the jockeys are up, and ready for the fray; and just as my Lord reaches the starting-place the Corsican Brothers ride gallantly up. Very business-like they look too. Old Jacky, who is apparently on capital terms with himself, and loudly offering to back his chance for any amount, is very smart in a sky-blue jacket and black cap, lent him by Mr. Snaffle, the trainer for the occasion. His nether limbs are not, however, so well got up, the brown cord breeches and brown tops he sports, though workmanlike, not harmonising well with the bright jacket.

Old Jimmy is really the smartest of the two, for young William Bacon, the steeplechasing young farmer, of Appletree Farm, has lent him a brand-new emerald jacket with yellow sleeves, and cap to match, lately made for him by his sweetheart, pretty Polly Hopkins. White cord breeches and brown-topped boots complete the bold Jimmy's attire.

Like their two jockeys, the quadrupeds are a pair of real old uns. Both are well known in the hunt, and both equally clever—in fact, perfect hunters in every way. There is not a place in the country either of them wouldn't creep through, if they couldn't jump it.

Perhaps, of the pair, old Jacky's brown horse, Ploughboy, has most admirers. Ploughboy is as old-fashioned a looking nag as

*The Corsican Brothers  
ride their March.*





you'd meet in a day's march—goose-rumped, square-tailed, Roman-nosed, and shoulders such as it does one's heart good to look at. If any—as no doubt they do—of the readers of *Fores's Notes and Sketches* know the old engraving of John Warde on Blue Ruin, with his favourite hound Betsy, and look at Blue Ruin, they will know to a nicety what sort of looking animal Ploughboy was.

'Now, then, Jack and Jimmy,' said my Lord, 'time's up! Are you both ready?'

'Bide a minute, my Lordship!' rejoined Jacky. 'Do any moor o' you dommed fules want my ten to *won*?' bawled he, for the benefit of the grinning crowd round. 'What, no moor on yer got the courage to back yer foolish opinions?' added he, contemptuously. 'Then 'arm reddey, my Lordship,' he said, with a grin, settling himself into his saddle as he spoke, and taking hold of his mare's head, having previously wetted the palms of his hands, to get a good grip.

'Ready, Jimmy?' cried my Lord to the other twin. Jimmy, with a knowing grin, nodded his old head in assent. 'Then, off you go!' and, followed by a crowd of mounted followers, some in front, some behind, away went the pair!

'Well, I'll be hanged if ever I saw such a game in my life!' ejaculated my Lord, eyeing the cavalry as they topped the first fence *en masse*, Jimmy and Jacky in the middle, their excited friends encouraging them with their shouts and yells as they went. 'I wish I wasn't judge!' added he. 'I'd have ridden with them too.' He then galloped off to the winning-post, to wait the finish.

The race needs no description. Suffice it to say, that though the pace was a trifle slower than Grand National form; the horse and the mare took their fences without a single mistake, and that when the mob of horsemen showed in sight people in the winning field saw that the Corsican Brothers were both together, and that to all appearance it was anybody's race.

Indeed it was! As the pair topped the last fence into the winning field they were level with each other. 'Go it, Jack! Flog away, Jimmy! You'll win! Jacky's won! No, he hasn't! Jimmy's won, I tell 'ee!' Such were the cries that rent the air as the pair, flogging and spurring away like demons, passed the judge's impromptu chair.

'Who's won, my Lord?' was then the cry.

'I *can't* separate 'em! It's a dead heat,' shouted his Lordship, almost as excited as the crowd.



'A dead heat! Hooray!' yelled the excited mob.

'One's as good a man as t'other, and neither's won,' shouted one red-faced farmer.

'Dash mar buttons, but ar always said as old Jimmy was as good a man as Jacky any day,' vociferated another.

And now little more remains to be told. Suffice it to say, that at the end of the luncheon Lord Hopscotch—after the health of the dead-heaters had been drunk with three times three, and one cheer more—insisted on the Corsican Brothers shaking hands and making friends that very moment. He would take no denial, he said.

And we are delighted to add that his good-natured Lordship's appeal to their better feelings was not in vain.

Amidst vociferous cheers from the company present, the two old boys, who were seated, one on each side of their host, stood bravely up, and then and there shook hands.

And as they did so, Jacky said to Jimmy, amidst roars of laughter,

'It's mar opinion, Jimmy, that you're a dommed good feller!' Said Jimmy to Jacky, 'You're another!'

## HER FIRST DAY WITH THE HOUNDS.

By 'G. F.'



THOUGHT her very charming when I met her at a ball;  
Then, at a garden party, she was fairest of them all.  
She was bewitching in the Row, resistless in the field;  
And on 'Her first day with the hounds' I knew my fate was sealed.

I marked her look of glad surprise on that eventful day,  
As with her sire she joined the meet and viewed the fox away;  
Then shaking off the craners, and all who would impede,  
First o'er the fence, then post and rails she cleared, and took the lead.

For thirty minutes at great pace, without a check, we went;  
O'er wattles, brooks, and ditches, until horses were nigh spent;  
When, through a spinney driving him, the hounds went at a rush,  
And they killed him in the open and she bore off the brush.

Homeward we rode, and talked of all which happen'd on that day;  
And other themes discoursed upon, though what I need not say.  
Her words were sweeter music than the pack's enliv'ning sounds;  
My happiness was dated from *Her first day with the Hounds.*

## JUNGLE JOTTINGS.

A TRIAL OF TEMPER. *By* 'DOOKER.'

HUNTING, and sport in general, are, by a certain school of moralists, held up to reprobation; their arguments generally being that when engaged in the sports of the field, besides other evils attendant thereon, men are apt to 'lose their tempers,' and in their excitement give vent to unparliamentary language. No doubt such occasions do sometimes occur; but if the aforesaid moralists took the trouble to analyse the qualifications necessary to make a good and successful sportsman (*not sporting man, mind*; for there is a vast difference between the two) they would find that to ensure success he must, above all things, *be cool*, and also be able to *keep his temper*.

Even under the most trying circumstances, it is not easy to enumerate all the qualifications necessary for a sportsman, and particularly an Indian one. To those greatest of all blessings, youth, health, and strength, he must add not a few virtues—namely, temperance, patience, perseverance, pluck, and endurance (all these he *must* have, or success will not smile on his exertions), and last, but not least, he must be able to bear disappointment. He must, in the words of the grand old hunting-song, have

‘Youth’s daring spirit, manhood’s fire,  
Firm hand, and eagle eye.’

The anecdote I purpose relating will, I trust, bear out the assertion I venture to make, that a *true* sportsman has his feelings under perfect control. There are trying times, I admit. Do we not all know the blank feeling of disgust and despair that came o’er us when, after playing that 25-lb. fish successfully in difficult water, and were just on the point of gaffing him, the point of our rod straightened and the slackened line came back to us? Or, given a good start, and after a fast twenty minutes with hounds, having pounded all the field, we are sailing away, chuckling to ourselves, an impassable ravine suddenly presents itself, and there on the other side we see the skirter and road-riders nick in with them, whilst they vanish from our gaze and we are left lamenting? But enough of this sore subject!

‘Once upon a time,’ in the days when we went pig-sticking, ‘a long time ago,’ there was a certain place in the gorgeous East, which we will call ‘Soorpore,’ situated in a hilly and jungle-covered district, where, though game of all sorts abounded and hog were in scores, there existed no record of one having been *legitimately* killed—by which I mean *speared*—as, owing to the difficult nature of the country, it was deemed permissible to shoot them—a deed which in any ‘riding’ country would be looked on with as much horror as a vulpecide would be regarded in a hunting county in England. The oldest sporting authority, a gallant Colonel, who knew every corner of the district, ridiculed the idea of being able to get hog into the open in any part of it ; for, remember, a wild hog is one of the most difficult animals to dislodge from his fastness, and most cunning in baffling those who try to induce him to take a line of country that does not recommend itself to his porcine mind.

A certain soldier, a hard-headed, hard-riding Scotsman (whom we will call Mackenzie), was spending his leave in the district, and held a different opinion to the gallant Colonel ; and, further, maintained that there *was* a spot where pig could be properly killed, not *murdered*, with the deadly rifle. As both the Colonel and Mackenzie clung tenaciously to their opinions, a party was organized, with the view of deciding the question ; and in due course we find the three, who were to contend for the honour of ‘First Spear,’ assembled at the jungle side. And here let us describe the nature of the ground, the men, and the horses. The difficulties of the beat no one but a scientific hog-hunter could appreciate. Suffice it to say, there was only one line of country over which there was the most remote chance of killing a hog ; and the odds were very heavy that the pig would break back through the beaters, and thus destroy all chance of a run, which under any circumstances could only be a short one. The ground was pretty fair—full of holes, however ; and at a little more than two thirds of the way there was a thick clump of ‘sindec’ bushes and trees, which, if the pig gained, he would, for a time at any rate, be safe from pursuit. Mackenzie was mounted on a very powerful and fast Australian mare ; Forbes, the leading civilian of the district, rode a well-bred Arab, but being a heavy man, though a first-rate spear, was rather under-horsed ; Bruce, a well-known hog-hunter from an adjoining station, was also on an Arab—a horse of great renown, rejoicing in the name of Starlight.

In the first beat science won the day by a master-stroke of manœuvre on Mackenzie's part, for he had the direction of the beat. A noble boar burst into the open, and, after a moment's hesitation, went racing away over the very line he was wished to take.

'Ride!' shouted Mackenzie; and then

'Each horseman stout nor sighed nor prayed,  
Nor saint nor ladye called to aid;  
Each bent his head and couched his spear,  
And spurred his steed to full career.'

The burst was a glorious one: the boar, a lanky hill fellow, as fast as a deer for the distance he had to go, and certain to fight to the death if once reached. The men all got away together. Mackenzie's Australian took a slight lead, and kept it; but only some two lengths off, and a little to the right, was Bruce on Starlight, straining every nerve and muscle to get up. To Mackenzie's left, prevented by his weight from being so well forward, but certain not to lose a chance if the boar gave him one, either by 'jinking' or turning, rode Forbes.

The 'sindee' clump is all but reached as the leading man gets within spear's length.

'Hurrah! who says a pig cannot be killed here?' shouts Mackenzie, smiling grimly, as he collects his mare for the final rush, inwardly delighted at the chance of beating Bruce and Starlight—the man and horse most renowned in their district.

The keen shining blade glistens within a foot of the boar; the spurs are rammed into the mare's heaving flanks; another six inches, and——

Is the spear won? and is he to be the hero of the day? Alas! the mare makes a slight peck, and the blade, instead of passing deep into the brawny shoulder it was intended to transfix, glides harmlessly over the bristles of the hog's back, without drawing one drop of blood, and is raised aloft as bright and unclouded with crimson as before!

As he dashed by, the half-maddened rider reversed his spear and struck back at the pig, in the vain hope of reaching him as the mare rushed past. The boar is missed, however; and, with a surly grunt of defiance and hate, dashing the foam off his tusks, with that upward and sideward toss of the head that ever means mischief, the gallant beast springs into the clump—the bushes close behind him, and he is safe for the moment.

The excitement, however, is greater than ever. A few beaters



will presently turn the boar out of his covert, and now, no matter in which direction he breaks, die he must! And the chances are that he will not run far, but will charge the first man that gets up to him. Meanwhile, Mackenzie and Bruce are in the highest state of excitement (poor Forbes has had a crashing fall, and his good Arab never recovered that day's work), and force their horses as far as they can into the clump, in the hope that the boar will charge, and thus enable the charged one to obtain the coveted honour of 'the first spear.'

This is a rash proceeding, and one that all good hog-hunters would condemn; for if a hog charges when the horse is not at nearly full speed, he is almost sure to run up the spear and do mischief. But such thoughts enter not into the minds of the two excited sportsmen. The boar, however, luckily for them, will not accept the challenge; and the men and horses fret for a few minutes, until a few beaters arrive, armed with sticks and followed by a few curs. Great is the hubbub. With shouts and yells they dive into the clump to turn out the boar.

Presently an angry roar, followed by the yells of the beaters and the howls of an unhappy cur who has felt the keenness of the boar's tusks, proclaim that the quarry is on foot and about 'to break' in no very amiable frame of mind.

The sportsmen are now keenly alive, watching for the hog to break—ready to dash at him the moment he does so. Another roar, another yell, another howl from a wounded dog, and right out between Mackenzie and Bruce bursts—*not the boar*, but a wretched, half-naked coolie, brandishing a bloody spear, and screaming with fiendish delight, 'My Lord, I've killed him! I've killed him!'

It was but too true. The wretch, without a soul above pork, and into whose misguided hands some horse-keeper had in an evil moment entrusted a spare spear, had, while the gallant foe's attention was taken up with his other enemies, crawled, as none but a lithe and half-naked coolie can, close to the boar and stabbed him to the heart!

Here, indeed, was a trial of temper which few but those who have been educated to bear such an experience (as Indian sportsmen usually are) could have endured.

The wretch who thus dared to trifle with the feelings of three well-armed, excited men, and rob them of their well-earned honours, was not then and there struck down, had not his worthless head broken with a spear-shaft, was neither sworn at nor

kicked,—but as the corpse of the gallant boar was dragged into the lists, where he fully intended to have met a fair foe in fair fight, the horsemen

‘Silently gazed on the face of the dead,  
And bitterly thought of the morrow.’

Was it for this—to see a pig stuck by a coolie—had Bruce marched Starlight over a hundred miles? For this had Mackenzie’s mare been trained like a racehorse? For this had Forbes—good-natured fellow that he was—given up his best shooting-ground and ruined his best horse? Let us draw a curtain over the heartrending scene; and do you, gentle reader, allow that our sportsmen ‘kept their tempers’ under *very* trying circumstances.

## SHUT IN.

A RACING SKETCH. *By* ‘FUSBOS.’

**I**T was the last day of the most terrible Ascot (looking at it, of course, from a business point of view) that I ever assisted at.

Well might the bookmakers be jubilant, and backers look blue! Favourite after favourite had been bowled over. Public form was nowhere, and private trials proved to be delusions and snares. The prophets were floored to a man (not a very uncommon occurrence, by the way), and altogether there was every prospect of several little accounts being missing at Tattersall’s on the following Monday morning. A relative of my own—a plunger, too, of the first water—had a three-year-old in a handicap, almost the last race on the card, and on him we meditated such a plunge as should at least get us back our losses of the week, if not a bit more. Yes! If the Fly-by-night colt did not win, what would become of us all, and myself in particular, was hard to say, and simply too awful to contemplate.

It was painful to my feelings to know that if the unnamed one did not run up to his trial, the ‘sport of kings’ would—the rest of that season at least—no longer be able to count on me as a supporter. Never again, probably, would that most volatile of ‘bookies,’ Charlie Nob, chaff me into accepting just a few points shorter odds than were obtainable elsewhere. Never again would the stolid Mr. Metal, after a little choice badinage,

give in to my offer of 7 to 4 on a 'moral,' instead of 2 to 1, and tell me, with a wave of his arm, to 'put it down.'

*Apropos* of Mr. Metal. A youth of my acquaintance, named Moonface—Muffington Moonface—fresh on the turf, brought with him a system (infallible, of course—all systems are). In the fulness of his heart he confided in Mr. Metal, and, having explained the system to him, asked for his valuable opinion in exchange.

'Well, there's only *one* fault that I can find in it, Mr. Moonface,' replied the Leviathan; 'there's only one fault that I can find in it, and that is this: *You'll braak the Ring, Sir! You'll braak the Ring!*'

Poor little Moonface walked away delighted, and went in for smashing the Ring with such impetuosity that the system came to an untimely end before Doncaster, the above conversation having taken place during the Two Thousand week at Newmarket.

To return to my story. When the numbers went up for the handicap in which my immediate friends and myself were so interested, and upon the result of which so much of our future peace of mind depended, it was not very long before the gay sportsmen and sportswomen assembled on the course found out which was favourite; for such a red-hot one as the Fly-by-night colt had not been served up all the week, terrific though some of the plunges had been during the meeting. Commencing at 5 to 2 against, in less than ten minutes it was a case of 'I'll take a slight shade of odds,' and he left off at 5 to 2 *on*. 'In for a penny in for a pound,' thought I, as I took whatever I could get, and all I could get, and saw all my much-damaged friends doing the same.

Small though the race was, our jockey was put on a monkey to nothing and told he *must* win. The field altogether numbered thirteen (a baker's dozen), but they were all horses of an inferior description; and when the Fly-by-night colt, an animal who it was generally supposed would have been near winning the Derby had he been entered for it, cantered down the course, looking just about as fit as hands could make him, and with the most dashing light-weight of the day on his back, it was only natural that not only his owner and those immediately connected with the stable, but the sporting outside public as well, should plank down their money on the three-year-old as if it was all over but shouting.





The Fly-by-Night Colt.  
This is a very fine specimen of the breed, and is one of the best of the season. It is a very fast horse, and is very much improved by its training. It is a very good horse, and is very much improved by its training. It is a very good horse, and is very much improved by its training.





'How do you feel, Jack?' said I, five minutes later, to the Fly-by-night's anxious owner.

'Don't ask, old man,' was the reply, as he looked through his glasses intently at the little group of fidgety horses at the starting-post. 'I wish to heavens they'd get off, for I can't stand this suspense much longer. It's that brute of a Tony Lumpkin won't join his horses, or they'd have been off long ago. Now they're in line again; and—yes!—no!—yes, they're off!'

'They're off!' echoed the crowd.

On they come all together, except the obstinate Tony Lumpkin, who is toiling along lengths in the rear. *But where's our horse?*

'By the Lord Harry, *he's shut in!*' gasped the favourite's owner, grasping my arm in his excitement as if he meant pinching it into two.

'What a settler!' groaned I, as the horses drew up to the stand, and I saw the Fly-by-night colt, evidently full of running, literally hemmed in, with apparently not a chance of getting out.

But we had reckoned for once without our host. Another second, and we saw the two leaders, who were now going as slow as tops, open out to the right and left, and then—and *then!*—at the very identical moment when the 'bookies' were proclaiming at the top of their voices the defeat of the favourite; at the very identical moment when his owner and his friends were shaking in their highly varnished boots with fear, out came the Fly-by-night colt full of running and won—his jockey grinning, and he himself pulling double—in a common canter by two lengths, and—*we were saved!* as General (save the mark!) Booth would say.

The history of the race was this. At this particular period the jockeys, in many cases, were in the habit of betting very heavily (thanks to the now stringent rules adopted by the Jockey Club, all that sort of thing is a thing of the past; and a good job, too); and in this particular instance the two leading jockeys, who, as I have described, opened out and let the Fly-by-night colt through, thereby enabling him to win, had, it turned out afterwards, themselves backed him heavily. They were both beaten themselves, and therefore had nothing to gain by stopping our horse from winning. Gladiateur was as nearly losing the Derby as a toucher from precisely the same reason; as no doubt many will remember, more especially the backers of Christmas

Carol, who no doubt would have been uncommonly pleased had the jockeys, when they had got Harry Grimshaw, who was on the favourite, well hemmed in their midst, kept him there.

Well, well! this is all very fine to write about. Racing is a most exciting, charming sport; and there is nothing more satisfactory in this world than to watch the horse you have backed, leave his field—at the Bushes, say, at Newmarket—and, coming right away, win in a canter. You can then say to your friends, ‘I told you so—eh? Far better horse even than I thought. Shall back him for the Cambridgeshire,’ &c. &c.

But it is rather *too* exciting—unpleasantly so, in fact—when you see the horse that carries your bottom dollar—perhaps a good deal more—right in the middle of a lot of horses, and some unsympathetic person who hasn’t a shilling on the race, sitting by your side on the drag, remarks blandly, ‘I’m afraid, my dear Plumper, it is impossible for the favourite to win, for—*he’s hopelessly “Shut in.”*’

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## A PHASE OF GASCON SPORT.

*By* WILF POCKLINGTON.

**W**ITH our peculiarly insular ideas of sport in general which, when in search of amusement, sends us galloping across country for miles, risking the—more or less—valuable necks of rider and horse, and in the result reducing both to a state of exhaustion, merely to kill a fox, which our continental neighbours would promptly shoot, and thus at once end the matter; or which, on the other hand, sends us tramping over field after field, through miles of varying stubble and plough, in search of that

‘Friend of our fathers, the partridge,’

instead of having the country covered with beaters for miles round, who would drive everything the size of a field-mouse to some given piece of cover, where we could at our leisure, and with a minimum of exertion, deliberately ‘pot’ them.

It is little to be wondered at that we are inclined to smile at the enthusiasm of a French sportsman, who will take as much trouble to stalk a blackbird or thrush as we would a deer; or who will stand for hours before a machine to attract larks, and

think it grand sport to bring them down as they fly in a countless cloud above the lure.

We smile at such a phase of sport, and leave it to our boys to try their 'prentice hands' upon ; but what would we say to *frog shooting*?

The mere mention of such a thing is laughable ; and yet this is a sport which obtains to a very large extent in France, and is not at all bad fun, providing the surroundings are agreeable.

In Gascony, where large tracts of marshes are to be found in almost every direction, it is *the* sport of the province ; and aristocrat or plebeian, lady or gentleman, may be seen pursuing it.

The gun, or rather, let me say, the offensive weapon, is a species of crossbow, the barrel of which is from five to six *yards* in length, the arrow is fully a yard longer, and may more correctly be called a spear ; the bow used for propelling it is of the ordinary size, and the action is exactly the same as an ordinary crossbow.

Those used by ladies are much lighter and more elegant than the above, often having a quantity of ornamental work, that makes them appear more like a piece of *bric-à-brac* than a serviceable sporting weapon.

In these swamps are found in great numbers the *grenouilles*, or green frogs, from which the dish well known to French epicures is prepared ; and in this district there are scores of men who make their living by supplying these frogs to the Parisian salesmen.

I am one of those self-opinionated fellows that never see any one doing an unusual feat without essaying it myself ; often, I must candidly own, to bring about a most ignominious *fiasco*.

The first time I saw one of these professional frog-catchers I wondered what on earth he was about.

He stood at the edge of a marsh, just where it was thickly fringed with bulrushes and other marshy growth, and peered in between the fringe in a most cautious manner. Suddenly he stopped, like a dog at point, grasped the butt of his cumbrous, heavy weapon, firmly between his right elbow and his side, took a good sight (if, indeed, it can be so called), pulled the trigger, twang went the bow, the arrow shot out, not to its full extent, but merely projecting some ten or twelve feet beyond the barrel, and as he sank the butt down on to his foot, I saw the frog transfixed on the point of the arrow, squirming about as though he were exceedingly uncomfortable.



I was completely puzzled ; and, drawing closer to the man, opened a conversation, with the view of learning what it all meant.

Taking the frog from the arrow point and depositing it in his basket, which was already nearly half full of frogs, he said,—

‘The frogs are so wary, it is only by this means that one is enabled to catch them ; if I were to use a spear, as Monsieur suggests, the mere action of my arm in throwing or thrusting would be sufficient to affright the frog, and my spear would but pierce the mud. With the ‘arbelast’ all is changed ; there is no movement save that of the finger, which is of no consequence, and the frog is easily caught. See, Monsieur ! there is a fine fellow !’

I peeped through the rushes, and there, close at hand, was a very fine one, sunning himself on a small hillock of mud and grass. His green-and-gold back glittered like enamel in the bright sun, and his eye shone like that of a basilisk.

Again the professor went through the process of stalking, aiming and firing, and again a frog was impaled on the sharp point of the arrow.

‘No ! it is not a profession in which one would have a chance of becoming a millionaire,’ said he, in reply to my question ; ‘it is only for a few weeks in the year that any numbers are to be caught ; and the price we get is but a few francs the hundred for the dealers have very close hands. They are so everywhere, I am told ; but Monsieur is a traveller, and perhaps knows that far better than I. But it is not alone for gain that such men as I follow the profession. Monsieur must not forget the sport, and that is grand.’

I thought I was not at all likely to forget the *sport*, if ever I found out where the said sport came in. Apart from the lucrative point, it seemed to me the most idiotic pastime man ever indulged in.

‘Would Monsieur care to shoot ?’ queried my mentor, with true French courtesy.

Monsieur replied he would ; and for the first time since a very small boy I held a crossbow in my hands. And such a crossbow ! Heavens ! the thing must have weighed fully thirty to forty pounds. This accounted for them not shouldering it, as I had intended doing before I handled it.

In the meantime the worthy professor had found me a favourable victim, and I stole up with stealthy tread until I thought myself within range. Cautiously I raised my head,

remembering that the slightest unwary move would scare my frog away. No ! there he sat, complacently basking in the sun. I advanced one more step, and took as careful aim as was compatible with the queer sensation of holding the gun at my hip instead of my shoulder ; I pulled at the trigger, and then —. Well, most sportsmen have heard of such a thing as ‘unconscious recoil,’ and how, in such a case, if a gun at half-cock be suddenly pulled to the shoulder to fire, and the trigger pulled whilst the hammers are at half-cock, the unconscious recoil will almost pitch you forward on your face. I do not know if it was this, or if it was that I craned too far forward with the heavy ‘arbelaſt’ in advance of my body, or if my feet ſlipped on the mud ; but the reſult was the ſame, for I fell on my face on the mud, and—on the frog, which by the merest chance was covered by my hand. I clutched it tightly, and ſcrambled to my feet, clothed in mud like a garment. It was a terrible meſs, and I ſaw leſs fun in frog-ſhooting than ever. However, my ſenſe of the ludicrous prevailed, and both my mentor and I laughed moſt heartily at my miſhap. I was determined not to be beaten, and tried again and again ; at firſt with varying ſucceſs, the arrow falling at a diſtance of ſeveral feet from the mark. Practice makes perfect, and before I left the ſpot I had gained the knack ; and tipping the worthy profeſſor a few francs, left him contemplating his (to him) marvellous riches.

My experience proved of ſervice to me, as before I left the neighbourhood I was invited to a frog-ſhooting picnic on a grand ſcale by ſome friends in the neighbourhood. They had talked the matter over amongſt themſelves, and anticipated ſome fun out of the unſucceſſful attempts of the *chasseur anglais* ; but they were diſappointed, and afterwards owned that I aſtoniſhed them with my prowess.

‘Where did you learn ? Who taught you ?’ queried the owners of various pairs of bright eyes, each individual being a perfect Diana at the aforeſaid croſſbow.

I unfolded the hiſtory of my ſad miſhap, made ſtill more ridiculous by my execrable French, and was rewarded by ſome of the merrieſt peals of laughter it has ever been my lot to create.

## A JUMP INTO THE NEW YEAR.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.



CHRISTMAS-TIDE and New-Year's Eve, the season of festivities and gathering together of hearts and households, surely awakens in us the strongest and most heart-stirring associations, and makes us more than usually sensible of the charm of each other's society. And our thoughts instinctively wander to absent friends. We long to hear of them. Where are they? and what are they doing? *Fores's Sporting Notes* introduced us last July to Mr. Charles Whipcord and Mr. Bramble, who were studying at the Cambridge University; we met them just after they had been down to Newmarket to see the Two Thousand run, so possibly we heard more of the books they made than the books they read. We will, however, join our old friends in their Christmas-tide festivities.

Whipcord was up in town for a day, after keeping his Michaelmas term, and hurrying down Piccadilly on foot, who should he run against but his friend Bramble, taking a constitutional stroll.

'Hullo, old chappie!' exclaimed Bramble, surprised at his friend's unwonted disregard for the regulation Piccadilly pace and appearance; 'Are you quite cracked?'

'No, old man! I'm not cracked, but I'm pretty well broke! You see, I got the governor to send me up to town on business; tried my luck at blind-hookey in a first-class carriage, won a small fortune at first, but in the end got pretty well cleared out; so, you see, I'm economising—can't afford a cab!'

'Here's a Hansom, old man, to hide yourself in; I want to talk to you, so we'll drive together.'

'Oh! that reminds me, Bramble; the girls want you down at the Grange to see the New Year in, and help with some tom-foolery or other!'

'Shall be most happy, I am sure. Who's staying at the Grange?'

'Well, there's Maggie Larkins; she rides ten stone four, and gave that black filly a sore back when she rode with the

Flareaway's last Wednesday. You know the filly, the one we bought at——?'

'All right, old man! leave the stables alone, and tell us who the girls are.'

'What a deuce of a hurry you are in! I'm telling you as fast as I can! There are our girls, Bee and Evy.'

We have heard of Bramble's unfortunate habit of 'reddening up,' and the note Bee, struck a tender chord on his heart's strings, and he blushed.

'And there's Blanche Hopkins.'

Bramble blushed more violently, and exclaimed, 'Blanche Hopkins!'

'Yes, and Laura Racquet!'

'Good gracious!' gasped Bramble, and the hectic flush had reached its climax in effect.

'Yes, you may well look surprised; she's worse than the whole lot put together. She's just about finished the old bay-mare, galloped her legs off; if the frost hadn't set in when it did, she'd have been cat's-meat by this time, and the "vet." said——'

'Gently! gently, old man! don't strain yourself! I think I'll change my mind and come and see you at the Grange later in the year.'

'Why, that is a shabby idea! You've met all the girls before, haven't you?'

'That's the worst part of it, dear boy, for three of them are old flames of mine, so you see it won't do!' said Bramble, with another blush, this time of shame.

'Oh Beetroot! you old Don Juan, you must come! Come and put in full time with the whole lot of them!'

'Thanks, dear boy; but my constitution wouldn't stand it!'

'Oh! you must come; each girl will flatter herself that she is the only one you ever loved!'

'That idea is very young!'

'Well, look here,' said Whipcord, in desperation; 'I'll go it with Blanche Hopkins myself—that'll relieve you of one of the three—and I'll make that noodle, the Hon. Featherstone, believe that Laura Racquet likes him, and he'll go for her, and she'll do him good!'

'Well, that's better; leaves me——'

'Leaves you Bee! I'll give her the tip, and see you through. it all right, old man! Ta! ta! Take care of yourself, and let us



know the train you come by!' and Whipcord skipped off to catch his own train.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was New-Year's Eve, and daylight was turning into gloaming, as punctual to the minute the 6.30 express from town steamed into the well-lighted station of Huntingboro', and out of a first-class carriage emerged Mr. Bramble, clad in a 'down-the-road' coat with a diagonal-checked 'two-to-one-bar-one' rug over his arm. A little stunted porter, with a face like an apple that had been trodden on soon secured the luggage of our redoubtable hero, which consisted of a port-manteau, gun-case, and hat-box, and took them to the dog-cart in waiting from the Grange. There was a five-mile drive over shocking bad roads, that were becoming positively dangerous from the combined effect of rain and frost; which latter, although not hard enough to make the ice bear, was sufficient to stop hunting.

'What are you driving to-night, coachman?' said Bramble, who always liked to know all about the cattle he rode behind.

'A bay 'oss, Sir, as we've 'ired; the squire always jobs the harness 'osses in the winter, Sir; roads is so shocking bad, it don't give 'osses a chance.'

'He's a willing little machiner.'

'Yes, Sir, he's very well for what he is; but you see, these 'ired 'osses never has a deal of speeret, and if you ask me what I prefers, I say, give me one with a touch of wice—they're always good goers, Sir!'

'They keep up a lot of saddle-horses at the Grange?'

'Yes, Sir; fourteen 'unters, two 'acks, and the five we 'ires for 'arness.'

'I suppose that's the indirect cause of the bad state of the roads?'

'Yes, Sir; it mainly is. You see, Sir, the gentry is all a hos-back; they seldom drives in the winter, and the roads is left to the surveyor, who does 'em as cheap as he can. It's a scandalous shame, Sir!'

With such sympathising talk Bramble managed to shorten his journey and gain a little information.

The Grange was a fine old irregular building of some magnitude, built in the reign of Elizabeth, with added wings in the debased Georgian period, marking the growth of the family of Whipcord, as they increased and multiplied, and outgrew the

old mansion, There was a fine backing of stately trees that had weathered many a storm, and what is more trying to well-grown timber—the woodman's axe, which had turned so many of the glorious old oaks on the Whipcord estate into *£ s. d.* Some fifty yards from the Grange stood a handsome symmetrical block of stables, with a quadrangle, clock-towered hay-tallet, and pretentious arched gateway. It was the only building seen in the same view with the Grange, excepting the lodge, and some went so far as to say that it rivalled the Grange in grandeur ; but we must dismiss this, as being the idea of a centaur overriding his hobby.

As the dog-cart rattled up the winding gravel drive the dogs at the keeper's lodge began barking, and the chorus was taken up by the terriers at the stable, and passed on to the deep-mouthed hounds at the Grange, the life-guards of the dogdom household. Charley Whipcord, accompanied by a rowdyish-looking little terrier, noisily welcomed Bramble as he entered the hall.

'How are you, old man? Let me help you to peel your jacket off!'

'Oh, I shall be all right as soon as I've thawed a bit!'

'Come on, then, we'll go to the hall; the governor's there, and will be pleased to see you!' said Whipcord, leading the way.

The governor, or rather Squire Whipcord, was a fine-looking old sportsman, with an egg-shaped head, closely-shaven face, and a merry twinkle in a rather mischievous-looking eye; he reminded one of a very naughty boy grown old. Being rather deaf, he (as is generally the case) loudly welcomed our redoubtable hero. The others sitting before the wood-fire in the hall were two elderly ladies, who acted the part of *chaperones* to the young people, the Squire being a widower; and a Captain Spunger, who, feeling tired from walking after partridges all day, was now enjoying a nap before dinner. The young people, who made up the party of fourteen staying in the house, were in the adjoining billiard-room, a noisy party of frozen out fox-hunters, chattering like magpies.

'How tiresome!' exclaimed Laura Racquet, as the gong sounded to dress for dinner; 'just as I was getting my eye well in for a break!'

'Oh, Laura, what nonsense! why, you fluked the cannon and pocketed yourself!'

'My dear fellow, I was never so truly on the spot before!'

'It won't do, Laura; it's a spot-barred game.'

'I say, Bee, I really believe that you shut your eyes and wished!'

'No, I did not, but I forgot, and shut the wrong eye,' said Bee, candidly, as her stroke turned out a surprise—a cannon and pocket.

'Time! Last round! The saddling-bell's rung!' roared old Whipcord, from the hall (he never could bear the idea of any one being late for dinner).

Charley Whipcord had been as good as his word. The Hon. Featherstone White, a young man, inclined to be good-looking, and with good prospects, but not overburdened with brains, was evidently 'hard hit' by the attractive, vivacious Laura Racquet, who was the life and soul of the party, her silvery laugh running up a scale like a ring of bells; and Charley himself appeared to be basking in the sunshine of pert Blanche Hopkins' smiles. Maggie Larkins was chaffing with the popular old hunting parson, the Rev. Joseph Whipcord, the Squire's youngest brother, of whom it was said, by his parishioners, that he was invisible all the week and inaudible on Sunday, but capital company nevertheless, abounding as he invariably did in good stories, one of which he was telling now, in his droll way, to Johnny Whipcord, a youth in Eton jacket, and his younger sister Evy, a graceful, slight girl, a charming rosebud, who promised to blossom some day into a rose.

That completes the party, with the exception of Bee, the elder daughter, who acted as hostess; and her qualities, attributes, and virtues must be given in fuller detail than those of her companions, seeing that she is to fill a prominent place in this sketch, and that we have been let into the secret of Bramble's little attachment in this quarter.

To catalogue a pretty girl's outward graces is seldom satisfactory, because they should be noted at a glance, which is impossible in description; and I would sooner have left it to my readers to picture for themselves the outward shape, colour, and divine beauty of so charming a girl as our heroine. A Paris could hardly have rejected her, without being convicted of unsound judgment.

But her eyes! The eyes are the poet's strongest fortress! And Bee's eyes were clear, dark-grey, well-placed, courageous and expressive, never shrinking, and in keeping with the lines of the well-formed chin, which bespoke strength of character, and might have expressed too much determination but for the mouth,

which had all the richness of youth, and the full, enticing curves of beauty.

The contour of her face was charming, but the general air she gave one, of being some one of importance, and her well-proportioned figure, were far more striking, from the wonderful grace they expressed when in motion ; for Bee could walk—alas ! how many girls there are who never attempt to do so. And as she came out of the billiard-room to welcome our hero you might have exclaimed, with the poet,—

‘What an arm, what a waist !  
What a waist for an arm !’

At least, so thought Bramble.

Half an hour later, and all were assembled in the drawing-room before dinner, the old Squire wearing a scarlet dress-hunting coat. Bee did the honours as hostess, and sent in all her guests properly coupled, dividing the plums equally, and reserving Bramble to whip in the pack with her.

It was a merry dinner-party, and noisy ; for all talked loudly, as the old Squire liked to hear and take part in the conversation.

‘How do you young people intend to see the New Year in, hey ?’ said the old Squire, breaking in, with a curious twinkle in his eye.

Half a dozen spoke at once. One said, Ring the New Year in ; another, Dance it in. The men said Smoke it in ; whilst the older ones remarked that they should certainly sit up and see it in.

‘Hey, hey ! I can’t hear if you all give tongue at once !’ said the Squire, sipping his sparkling Burgundy. ‘You all know my custom at the Grange on New-year’s Eve. I offer a gold buckle-ring to the young woman who will invent the most novel way of welcoming in the New Year !’

‘It’s a case of ringing the belle !’ roared young Whipcord in the Eton jacket.

‘Hey ? what ? you young jackanapes !’ (He had not caught the meaning of young Hopeful’s pun.) ‘I’ll promise you that you won’t get the ring that way. They made such an infernal row last year, and cracked the only sound bell in the church-steeple. I had to write a substantial cheque for that bit of amusement !’

‘Well done, Governor ! You again put a check on the



bells!' But Whipcord junior's facetiousness was promptly suppressed.

The old Squire remarked to Bramble,—

'I'll give you odds, Sir, that no one wins the ring to-night!'

'Thank you, Sir! A pound to four shillings will suit me. Will anybody else back the open event for fillies? I want to hedge!'

Several present had a bid on the event, and this put the ladies on their mettle, every one being determined to win the prize.

'Couldn't we do something in the ghost line?' suggested Laura Racquet.

'Romantic idea!' chimed in her cavalier, the Honourable. 'Every house of any importance has its ghost, and I should think that there is "a ghost in the cupboard" somewhere here. (Of course, he should have said 'skeleton'.)

'Well, one night last summer our watchman saw a ghost,' began young Whipcord, in an assumed solemn, sepulchral voice. 'The ghost was on the lawn, and the old man went green with fright; but a sense of duty or something overcame his fears, and he walked up to the white object, and said, "Look 'ere, we don't want no foolin'!" and then he discovered it was a large white azalia in full blossom!'

'Oh! it makes me creep!' said Mrs. Spunger, shrugging her shoulders.

'But how can you conjure up a ghost at the right moment, and make the Squire believe it really is one?' was a poser put by some one.

'Oh, I wouldn't mind taking the part of the ghost!' said Laura Racquet, who was rather clever at theatricals.

'Miss Racquet, the white night-gown costume would thoroughly become you.' (Not bad for the Honourable.)

'Hey, but, if I know the Squire aright,' said the old parson, 'he wouldn't be frightened at a pretty girl in a night-gown—not he! he'd want to shake hands with her, and there'd be an end of your ghost delusion.'

And while some of the others began to explain that ghosts wore natural clothing, the Squire, who had caught the shrill treble of the ladies, inquired,—

'Hey? what's that about ghosts at night? I won't have any ghosts here—don't believe in 'em!'

'They make the Governor a bit creepy!' said the incorrigible young Whipcord.

'Hey? what's that he says?'

'Oh, nothing; only Johnny was afraid that you might jump if you saw a ghost,' said Evy, trying to explain away her brother's impertinent remark.

'I jump? Stuff! nonsense! My jumping days are over, and I'm quite contented now to look on—and they do say that I'm a judge of a competition,' said the old Squire, good-humouredly.

'Well, then, papa,' said Bee, 'why shouldn't we jump into the New Year this evening, and you shall judge us?'

'Ah! ah! capital! capital idea of mine!' said the old Squire, in great glee.

There was a general buzz of conversation now: youth and beauty—talent was not represented—all straining and craning at the idea of the jump into the New Year, and each unmercifully cudgelling his wits to outdo his neighbour.

Then arose the difficult question as to what form the competition should take, and how the judging should be conducted. The old Squire was unanimously voted judge, as he usually acted in that capacity at the horse-shows throughout the country. He was very keen on the competition, and was for putting them all through their paces, having a great idea of how a woman should move.

'None of your tripping, trotting, ambling, or waddling, but, what one rarely sees, the walk.'

But papa's sporting horse-show tendencies had to be modified, as no one wished to compete on the chance of having her colours lowered, and thereby start a full-fervoured, sisterly animosity. So it was finally arranged that all who liked should stand on chairs, and the butler should sound the hour of midnight on the gong as the signal to jump into the New Year. The best jump is understood to bring the greatest amount of happiness during the ensuing year, the distance jumped not being of so much importance as the novelty of the style of jumping.

'Oh, Mr. Bramble!' said Bee, casting an imploring glance that melted the heart of our hero, 'What shall I do? My ankle is not strong enough to jump. I sprained it last year, and I should so much like to win the ring!'

‘Well, Bee, I’m awfully sorry ; I’ll do anything for you if you will call me anything but—Mr. Bramble. But I’m sure you’d have to walk away sound from your fence before such a judge as your father!’

‘I believe you want Laura to win ; you know she can jump a tennis-net,’ said Bee, pouting. Artful little Bee!

‘No, she shan’t!’ replied Bramble, gallantly. ‘I’ve backed you to win, Bee, so you mustn’t scratch!’

‘If I were only on horseback I’d win easily,’ rejoined Bee demurely.

‘Well! and why shouldn’t you? I’ll get you a horse, and you shall win in a canter.’

‘Oh, you are a good fellow! Get me old Billy to ride, do!’ said Bee, in great glee.

Bramble soon ascertained that old Billy was a strong Welsh pony, a year older than his young mistress, and as steady as old Time: had carried the children in panniers, let them get on his back in the stable, had been known to walk into the house, and was quite capable of jumping a prostrate chair. I may add that Bee herself was perfectly at home in the saddle, so that there was no danger attached to this novel idea of catching the judge’s eye.

The servants were on the alert, as they enjoyed these New Year revels immensely. The stud-groom, therefore, had old Billy saddled and bridled and up at the Grange in double-quick time. The maids stood at the top of the staircase on the corridor, looking down into the hall ; and the men stood at the entrance of the billiard-room, eager to see the fun.

At five minutes to twelve, as Squire Whipcord put it, eight turned up at the post, and two were doubtful starters. The eight mounted chairs ; and of the two doubtful starters one was Bee—a dark horse—who would not mount a chair, and yet would not scratch from the competition ; and the other was Bramble, who said he would not run, unless his stable or table-companion, Bee, had to scratch at the last minute.

Now, of the eight, who gallantly mounted the chairs and spent a painful five minutes of suspense anticipating the sound of the gong, as the old Squire reported it, ‘the first to jump off was Maggie Larkins, who went off her chair as if she were shot, and ricocheted on touching the ground. Charley Whipcord attempted to out-distance every one, by a long jump off his chair, and









sprawled all over the course. The Hon. Featherstone White was cannoned by Laura Racquet. As they jumped against one another they reduced it to a match, this was reported to the stewards as a case of foul riding ; and there was some dissatisfaction amongst Laura Racquet's backers, as she upset the betting-ring in her jump for an engagement-ring. Johnny Whipcord hurdled over the back of his chair ; and his sister Evy hopped off hers like a canary from a perch. The Rev. Joseph Whipcord made as if to go, refused, went again, and tipping his chair up, fell with it. Blanche Hopkins turned giddy, and was left at the post, having to be helped down from her chair.

The judge was not to declare the winner until the hour had done striking ; all having jumped, Bramble stepped forward and cleared the way as Bee cantered across the hall upon old Billy, and put him at an overturned chair, which he topped in good style. There was a general exclamation of surprise, and the old Squire gave a shrill who-whoop ! with delight. Bee heard it, and her spirits rose, for she guessed that she had won the ring ; and, seized with the spirit of mischief, instead of pulling Billy up after his jump, she made for the large staircase, and, giving him his head and a tap with her whip, he scrambled up the wide carpeted staircase like a cat. All the maid-servants and the housekeeper on the landing of the staircase simply panic'd on the spot, as Billy reached the top ; Miss Hawkins, the maid of Laura Racquet, going off into hysterics, the shock to the nervous system being so great ; but then servants are so easily upset.

Bramble ran like a hare across the hall, and was with the pony almost as soon as he reached the landing, on the last stroke of twelve. The opportunity was afforded, and his arm was round her waist in a minute as he lifted her out of the saddle for fear old Billy should panic too ; and she was the first to wish him 'A Very Happy New Year.'

'Happy ! Why, this is up in the seventh heaven of happiness !' replied poor Bramble.

'You forget it's only the first landing we are on,' said Bee, archly, and gently—very gently—reminding him that he had forgotten to remove his arm from her waist, and the fainting maids were coming to, and were keen observers.

Old Whipcord sent the fear-frightened maids restoratives in the shape of hot mince-pies and brandy, by the good-

looking under-footman, and they very soon were themselves again.

Bee and Bramble joined the astonished party in the hall; the Squire was delighted, and all voted that Bee had won the ring, and the ceremony of 'ringing the Belle' was gone through with much who-whooping and tally-hoing! Nothing would induce old Billy to descend the stairs; he had to be half carried, half dragged down, and taken back to his stable.

Bee now wears the plain gold-buckle ring she won that New-year's Eve, as a keeper to that pretty little diamond ring, given her by some one—you must guess who for yourself.

Price Ten Shillings and Sixpence, handsomely bound,

SPORTING  
RECOLLECTIONS

OF

HUNTING,  
SHOOTING,  
STEEPLECHASING,  
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CRICKET,

*&c. &c.*

BY

FINCH MASON.

*With 102 Illustrations by the Author,*

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LONDON:

MESSRS. FORES, 41 PICCADILLY, W.

1885.

[*Vide 'Opinions of the Press' on next page.*]



OPINIONS OF THE PRESS  
ON  
SPORTING RECOLLECTIONS.

By FINCH MASON.

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‘Lively and amusing; will be thoroughly enjoyed by lovers of outdoor sports.’—*The Times*.

‘Traverses the broad field of our great national pastimes . . . The graphic illustrations will assuredly not lower Mr. Finch Mason’s reputation.’—*Daily Telegraph*.

‘Humorous tales and racy anecdotes. Mr. Finch Mason is simply John Leech *redivivus*.’—*Morning Post*.

‘There is a great deal of humour in the author’s stories.’—*Daily News*.

‘Mr. Finch Mason is at the same time a practical sportsman, a competent writer, and an artist; his horses are already known to fame, and his characters sit them in approved style. All the illustrations are good.’—*Field*.

‘Very lively and entertaining; there is a freshness and spontaneity which are never found in the vamped-up experiences of other people.’—*The County Gentleman*.

‘Full of bright, crisp, and entertaining anecdotes. The illustrations are capital.’—*Land and Water*.

‘Mr. Mason is as clever with his pencil as he is with his pen. His fun is always amusing, and never forced.’—*Bell’s Life*.

‘Brims over with humour, overflows with fun, and sparkles with wit.’—*The Oldham Chronicle*.

‘A careful study of this volume will be almost a liberal education to an appreciative young sportsman.’—*Sporting Chronicle*.

‘A collection of sporting stories elegantly got up, and the author’s illustrations are fully equal to his text—which is saying a good deal.’—*Horse and Hound*.

‘One of the most amusing works we have come across for some time.’—*Licensed Victuallers’ Gazette*.

‘Undoubtedly the best of this well-known author’s works. The majority of the portraits of personages prominent in the world of sport are happily hit off.’—*Sportsman*.

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## FORES'S NEW SPORTING PUBLICATIONS.

A pair of highly-finished Engravings, from Paintings by F. CECIL BOULT and BASIL J. NIGHTINGALE, entitled

**THE FIRST DAY OF THE SEASON**, by F. Cecil Boulton, introduces us to a charming young lady on a well-bred chestnut, preceded by a gentleman, who is a type of the old English Sporting Squire, well mounted on a clipped bay, who is opening a gate into a lane, in which are seen entering a field on the opposite side, on their way to cover, the Huntsman, Whips, and Hounds.

Size, 30 by 14 inches.

Artist's Proofs, £5 5s. Prints, £1 1s. Coloured, £1 11s. 6d. And

**THE END OF A LONG RUN**, by Basil J. Nightingale,

Companion to above, presents us with the ultimate of the Noble Sport, 'The Death of the Fox,' who has just been rescued from the Pack with Brush, Pads, and Mask intact, the former doubtless intended for the Lady on the blown, thoroughbred-looking Hunter which forms the centre of the picture. The Huntsman's Bay and Hounds possess quality and character.

Size and prices the same as above.

### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

'HUNTING SCENES.—A pair of subjects from the hunting-field, "The First Day of the Season," by Cecil Boulton, and "The End of a Long Run," by Basil Nightingale, have been engraved by Mr. Henry Papprell, and are published by Messrs. Fores of Piccadilly. The spirit of the originals has been well caught, and the proof impressions, which have just been issued, show great care and finish.'—*Daily Telegraph*.

'MESSRS. FORES, Publishers, of 41 Piccadilly, have just published two very fine engravings, "The First Day of the Season," after Cecil Boulton, and "The End of a Long Run," after Basil Nightingale. These engravings are of superior merit and will be welcome to all whose taste runs in the direction of sporting subjects which have been adequately handled, as they have been in this instance, and engraved with care.'—*Standard*.

'MESSRS. FORES, the well-known sporting publishers of Piccadilly, have just issued a pair of new hunting scenes, artists' proofs of which they have kindly forwarded to us. One of these is called "The First Day of the Season," after Cecil Boulton, and represents a lady on horseback, attended by a groom, and preceded by an old sportsman, probably the master, who is in the act of opening a gate for her. On the other side of the fence the hounds are seen proceeding to draw a covert to the right, accompanied by the whips, while a portion of the field is seen in the middle distance. The trees on the left are well drawn, and the whole subject has been finely handled. The companion picture, "The End of a Long Run," after Basil Nightingale, is a very spirited composition. The whip has just taken the defunct Reynard from the hounds, who are eagerly waiting for the share of the prize which will be theirs when the honours of the chase have been secured for the lady who is in at the death. The lady's horse is thoroughly blown, her bespattered dress shows the heavy nature of the ground she has traversed, while the fact that only one other mounted figure is in sight shows that the run has been a hard as well as a long one. The perspective in both pictures is particularly good, and the pictures themselves, when suitably framed, will form handsome additions to the sportsman's art treasures.'—*Sporting Chronicle*.

'THE engravings have been carefully executed by Papprell. The subjects represented are full of life, and being faithful realities will forcibly appeal to all lovers of sport.'—*County Gentleman*.

'MESSRS. FORES'S GALLERY.—Two engravings just published by Messrs. Fores illustrate hunting subjects of equal interest though dissimilar character. The one is entitled "The First Day of the Season," the other "The End of a Long Run." In the former, which is after a picture by Mr. Cecil Boulton, the day's work has yet to be done. Men, horses, hounds, all fresh and all eager for the fray, are on their way to the covert-side. There is a large "field," but only one lady among them. Mounted on a strong hunter in the immediate foreground, and awaiting somewhat impatiently the leisurely opening of a gate by an elderly gentleman who has seen too much of life to be in a hurry about anything, she has the look and seat of a true sportswoman. She will ride as straight across country as any of the other sex—perhaps straighter than most of them. In the second print, after a painting by Mr. Basil Nightingale, the run is over, and a long and eventful run it has been. A lady and the whipper-in alone are in at the death. The ravenous hounds are giving tongue clamorously for their prey. Both engravings are on view, with many other sporting pieces, at the Publishers' well-known gallery in Piccadilly.'—*Morning Post*.

# FORES'S NEW SPORTING PUBLICATIONS.

A pair of upright Hunting Prints, highly coloured, from Paintings by  
F. CECIL BOULT, entitled

## GONE AWAY! AND RUN TO EARTH!

*Size, with margin for framing, 31 by 19 inches.*

Price £2 2s. the pair.

### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

'FROM Messrs. Fores and Co., 41 Piccadilly, we have received two companion coloured prints, "Gone Away" and "Run to Earth." The artist is Mr. F. Cecil Boulton, some of whose hunting pictures have already been noticed in these columns. Dealing first of all with "Gone Away," we are glad to find that the artist has broken the traditional method of representing the pack in a wedge-like form, with the nose of the leading hound on the ground, that of the second in the air, and so on. In Mr. Boulton's picture there are only two and a half couple of hounds in the foreground, and they are not in conventional attitudes. The huntsman's horse is coming nearly straight on end at the spectator—a position that renders the representation of animals additionally difficult. At the finish of the run, the master is up at the drain before the huntsman, notwithstanding an evident fall, and is the prominent character in the plate. These pictures are well coloured, and will form an acceptable addition to the hunting-man's picture-gallery, should he have any wall space to spare.'—*The Field*.

"'GONE AWAY" and "Run to Earth" are from original pictures by Mr. F. Cecil Boulton, who has handled his subjects in a masterly manner, indicative of thorough acquaintance with, and close observation of, hunting in the shires. The landscapes are fresh and breezy, the figures boldly drawn, the men sit their horses as if they knew how to handle them, and were not in the habit of wasting time in looking for gaps or gates. The horses and hounds have been drawn with a firm hand; the former are fine specimens of the high-class hunter, while there is a great deal of the right sort of character about the hounds. Both subjects are excellent in composition, and they have been treated with a pleasing absence of conventionality which will render them doubly acceptable to all sportsmen.'—*Sporting Chronicle*.

'THE artist has succeeded in vigorously portraying an exciting scene in the hunting-field, and especially is he entitled to praise for his spirited drawing of the horses and hounds. The foreshortening of the foremost horse in "Gone Away" is a masterpiece of technical skill, and the massing of the hounds in the second picture is also well done. Messrs. Fores are to be commended for their enterprise in this popular line of art.'—*Bell's Life*.

'THERE is one other matter to which I should like to call attention. It is the production by Messrs. Fores, of Piccadilly, of some beautiful hunting-plates, from the original pictures in their possession. There should be a strong demand for these in country circles as well as in sporting London. Therefore, I say, "Hark forward" to Fores's, and have a look at them.'—*Sporting Life*.

'MESSRS. FORES, of 41 Piccadilly, have issued some good coloured sporting prints illustrative of foxhunting scenes. There is a go and vividness about these that should commend them to all those misguided beings who peril their necks tracking vermin while we more sapiently sit in our study with the *Calendar*, laboriously spotting losers.'—*Sporting Times*.

'THESE prints have been unconventionally treated, both in composition and shape, and the style and character of the horses, hounds, and men, are such as will commend themselves to hunting-men.'—*Land and Water*.

'THE drawings of the horses and hounds are full of life in the exciting scenes which are portrayed, and will in their reality commend themselves to all lovers of the Chase.'—*Country Gentleman*.

LONDON: PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. FORES, 41 PICCADILLY, W.

## MESSRS. FORES

Be given to announce the publication of a highly finished Etching  
by WALTER A. COX, entitled

# 'DOLCE CON ESPRESSIONE,'

From the Picture by J. WATSON NICOL.

Size, 17½ by 12½ inches.

Two Court Jesters in motley garb, with cap and bells, are beguiling the tedium of their ordinary vocations with a vocal and instrumental duet, and the soul-wrapt expressions of their faces is inimitably given as they are discoursing a passage 'dolce con espressione.'

This exquisite work is in the artist's happiest vein of humour, and will doubtless appeal to all lovers of music.

Remarque Proof, £5 5s. Artist's Proof, £3 3s. India Prints, £1 11s. 6d.  
Prints, £1 1s. Coloured, £3 3s.

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### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

'AN engraver whose name is new to us, Mr. Walter Cox, has reproduced with much force and cleverness Mr. Watson Nicol's amusing picture, "Dolce con Espressione." Two mediæval and middle-aged minstrels are singing to their own accompaniment on the lute, and the painter has characterised them with a great deal of humour. The publishers of this plate are Messrs. Fores of Piccadilly.'—*The Times*.

'"DOLCE CON ESPRESSIONE."—An etching has been made by Mr. Walter Cox after the original picture, bearing this title, from the hand of Mr. J. Watson Nicol. The subject, which is characteristically and humorously treated, is a couple of mediæval clowns engaged in a vocal duet, which they accompany with their lutes. Messrs. Fores, of Piccadilly, are the publishers.'—*Daily Telegraph*.

'Mr. Watson Nicol's interesting picture, "Dolce con Espressione," has been etched by Mr. Walter Cox, and published yesterday by Messrs. Fores of Piccadilly. The subject of the picture is a full-dress rehearsal (cap and bells), by two of the professional fools of long ago, of a new song. Their manuscript music is posed against an earthenware water-bottle, and the two vocalists are singing the concluding passage, "dolce con espressione," with a heavenly expression on their upturned faces, not altogether consistent with the profession "to which they had the honour to belong."'

*Pall Mall Gazette*.

'That gift of droll characterisation in which Mr. Watson Nicol signally excels is laughably manifest in his picture called "Dolce con Espressione"—a couple of waggish fellows, apparently Court buffoons of some long-vanished Italian dukedom, practising a duet together. There is comic intensity in their zeal, which is probably much in excess of their musical science. This amusing little work has been etched in skilful fashion by Mr. Walter A. Cox, a new "hand," of whose art we do not remember to have seen any previous example. Messrs. Fores, of Piccadilly, are the publishers.'—*Morning Post*.

'MESSRS. FORES, of Piccadilly, have issued a clever etching by Walter Cox, after J. Watson Nicol. It represents a couple of jesters singing a duet, and their solemn countenances are in ludicrous contrast with their professional costume, one with upturned eyes, while he twangs his instrument, the other gravely scanning the notes on the sheet of music before him. It is a capital work.'—*Illustrated London News*.



## FORES'S SPORTING PUBLICATIONS.

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### FORES'S NATIONAL SPORTS. After J. F. Herring, Sen.

1. THE START FOR THE DERBY. Price £3 3s.

2. STEEPLE-CHASE CRACKS. Price £3 3s.

FOX-HUNTING.—3. THE MEET. 4. THE FIND. 5. THE RUN. 6. THE KILL.  
Price £10 10s. the Four.

### RACING.

7. SADDLING. 8. A FALSE START. 9. THE RUN IN. 10. RETURNING TO WEIGH.  
Price £10 10s. the four, or the Set of Ten Plates, price £26 5s.

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4. CAMEL AND BANTER.

2. TOUCHSTONE AND EMMA.

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7. BAY MIDDLETON AND BARBELLE (the Sire and Dam of the Flying Dutchman).

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2. THE HUNTING STUD.

3. THOROUGH-BREDS.

4. THE TEAM.

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1. CHANGING HORSES.

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5. THE OLDEN TIME.

6. THE NIGHT TEAM.

### FORES'S COACHINGS. After J. W. Shayer.

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Price £1 11s. 6d.

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### FORES'S HUNTING ACCOMPLISHMENTS, Indispensable with Hounds. After H. ALKEN, Sen. Six Plates, price £1 5s.

1. GOING ALONG A SLAPPING PACE.

2. TOPPING A FLIGHT OF RAILS, AND COMING WELL INTO THE NEXT FIELD.

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5. CHARGING AN OX-FENCE.

4. IN-AND-OUT CLEVER.

6. FACING A BROOK.

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1. A TURN OF SPEED OVER THE FLAT.

4. UP TO SIXTEEN STONE.

2. A STRANGE COUNTRY.

5. A RARE SORT FOR THE DOWNS.

3. DESPATCHED TO HEAD QUARTERS.

6. A MUTUAL DETERMINATION.

**THE SPORTING CANTAB.** By Cuthbert Bradley.

The Central Figure represents a modern university sportsman puffing a cigarette in front of his fireplace. Over the mantelpiece are depicted the insignia of learning and sport; the latter, as may be supposed, predominating; while at his feet are three fox-terriers. Surrounding him are the following sketches of incidents connected with his 'Varsity' life—'Down at Ditton in the May Week,' 'Coaching for his "Little Go,"' 'Dons Silk at Cottenham,' 'A Run with the Trinity Beagles,' 'Driving Tandem,' 'Hunted by the Proctor,' 'Playing Polo for the 'Varsity,' 'A Peep at Newmarket,' and 'Hunting with the Fizwilliam.'

Coloured Print, 17 by 12 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches, £1 1s.

**THE SPORTSMAN'S DREAM,** by R. M. Alexander,

represents a tired and sleeping Sportsman reclining in his easy-chair before a comfortable fire, dreaming of the following Sports, which are cleverly depicted in the wreaths arising from his half-smoked pipe; viz., Hunting, Yachting, Coaching, Pigeon-Shooting, Billiards, Golf, Deer-Stalking, Grouse-Shooting, Steeple-Chasing, Salmon-Fishing, Boxing, Racing, Polo, and Cards.

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**SALMON-FISHING,** by W. Brackett, in four subjects,

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Partridge, Grouse, Wild Duck, and Woodcock, will prove acceptable to all 'gunners.' Dogs, game, and sportsmen are thoroughly well delineated by one who is evidently master of the 'business.'

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**ESCAPED!** A panting 'Vixen' who has doubled upon her pursuers, and is anxiously listening to their retreating sounds.

Coloured Prints, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  by 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches, 15s. the pair.

**THE NIGHT TEAM,** by C. Cooper Henderson, forms

Plate 6 of the celebrated Series of Fores's Coaching Recollections, and shows the night 'Screws' being 'put to,' the duck-toed Coachman looking to the harness, whilst the Guard affixes the lamps. This is replete with 'character,' and one of the best of the Series.

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**MOTHER AND CHILD,** by Sir E. Landseer, R.A., a fac-

simile in Etching of a tinted Sketch of a well-shaped old-fashioned Hunting Mare and Foal, forming a companion to the well-known and very popular work by the same Artist, entitled

**THE HUNTSMAN AND HOUNDS.** Size, 14 by 10

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Artist's Proofs, £2 2s. each; Prints, £1 1s. each.

**FORES'S HUNTING INCIDENTS.** After W. H.

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1. A VIEW HALLOO.
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**FORES'S SERIES.** (A Front and Back View of a Lady Riding to Hounds.) After C. B. BARBER. Price £2 2s. the pair.

1. FIRST AT THE FENCE.

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**FORES'S STEEPLE-CHASE SCENES.** After H. ALKEN, Sen. Six Plates, price £3 3s.

1. THE STARTING FIELD. 2. WATTLE FENCE WITH A DEEP DROP.

3. IN AND OUT OF THE LANE. 4. THE WARREN WALL. 5. THE BROOK.

6. THE RUN IN.

**FORES'S HUNTING SKETCHES.** (The Right and Wrong Sort.) Showing a Good and Bad Style of going across Country. After H. ALKEN, Sen. Six Plates, price £3 3s.

1. HEADS UP AND STERNS DOWN. 4. CLERICAL AND LAY.

2. A GOOD HOLD OF HIS HEAD. 5. A CUSTOMER, AND HOW TO GET RID OF HIM.

3. A CUT AT THE BROOK. 6. THE FARMER'S FIELD OF GLORY.

**FORES'S SERIES OF THE MOTHERS.** After J. F. HERRING, Sen. Price 7s. 6d. each.

1. HACK MARE AND FOAL.

5. SOW AND PIGS.

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3. DUCK AND DUCKLINGS.

7. DRAUGHT MARE AND FOAL.

4. HEN AND CHICKENS.

8. COW AND CALF.

9. HUNTING MARE AND FOAL.

**FORES'S RACING SCENES.** After J. F. HERRING, Sen. Price 21s. each.

1. ASCOT.—The Emperor, Faugh-a-Ballagh, and Alice Hawthorn, Running for the Emperor's Plate, value 500 sovs.

2. YORK.—The Flying Dutchman and Voltigeur Running the Great Match for 1000 sovs. a-side.

**FORES'S CELEBRATED WINNERS.** After J. F. HERRING, Sen., and others. Price 21s. each.

1. THE HERO, with John Day, Sen., and Alfred Day.

2. THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, with J. Fobert and C. Marlow.

3. TEDDINGTON, with A. Taylor and Job Marson.

4. BRUNETTE, the celebrated Steeple-Chase Mare.

**FORES'S COACHING INCIDENTS.** After C. C. HENDERSON. Price £4 10s. the set of Six.

1. KNEE DEEP.

3. FLOODED.

5. IN TIME FOR THE COACH.

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4. THE ROAD v. THE RAIL.

6. LATE FOR THE MAIL.

**FORES'S COACHINGS.** After J. W. SHAYER. Price 21s. each. UP HILL—Springing 'em. DOWN HILL—The Skid.

**FORES'S ROAD SCENES.** (Going to a Fair.) After C. C. HENDERSON. Price 15s. each.

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2. CART HORSES.

**LEFT AT HOME.** After R. B. DAVIS. Price £1 11s. 6d. Represents a fine stamp of Hunter, and Hounds of perfect form, excited by the sound of the huntsman's horn.

**HIS FIRST AUDIENCE**, by A. Harvey Moore. Engraved by WALTER A. COX. Fisher Lad, leaping against the stern of a boat, intently playing on a pipe; three donkeys standing near, appearing absorbed by the musical strains.

Size of Work, 23½ by 14 inches.

Remarque Proofs, £3 3s.; Artist's Proofs, £2 2s.; India Prints, £1 11s. 6d. Prints, £1 1s.; Coloured, £2 2s.

**FOX-HUNTING**, by Cecil Boulton. A Set of 4 Upright.

1. A FAVOURITE MEET.

3. IN THE FOREMOST FLIGHT.

2. THROWING THEM IN.

4. 'BREAK HIM UP, BEAUTIES!'

Ladies, as well as gentlemen, are here introduced in the varied incidents of the chase. The treatment is sportsmanlike and unconventional, the shape is elegant, and the size convenient for hanging.

Coloured, 21½ by 9 inches, £8 8s. the set of Four.

**ON THE ROAD to GRETNA**, by C. Cooper Henderson.

Shows that historical vehicle, an old 'Po-Chay' and four, going at speed, with a gentleman leaning out of the window offering a purse to the Post Boys—pursuers in the distance. The stamp of Horses and character of Post Boys are admirably given by the above unrivalled painter of Coaching and Road Scenes.

Coloured, 17½ by 11 inches, £2 2s.

**THE HUNTING SEASON IN IRELAND**, a pair by

CECIL BOULT. Are humorous satires on the 'boycotting' of hunting; in one of the plates a Fox attired as an Irish peasant is defiantly trailing his coat before a Foxhound dressed as a Huntsman; in the other we have Mr. Fox, Wife, and Family, still humorously attired, enjoying a picnic, without fear of interruption from their old enemies the Hounds.

Coloured, 15½ by 11 inches, £4 4s. the pair.

**'LOST AND FOUND'**, by Stanley Berkley.

'Weary, and worn, and sad,

By the lamp's cold gleam I stand,

Waiting and watching, sighing and sighing,

For that loved and long-lost hand.

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